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ABSTRACT

This handbook defines, discusses, and provides guidelines for academic and pedagogical concerns of the study of religions in public secondary schools. Although it was designed particularly for use by Michigan educators, especially secondary pre-service and in-service religion teachers, the book can be adapted readily to other locales and levels. In chapter one the author discusses the legal and ethical contexts in which the study of religion may take place in Michigan public schools and presents guidelines based upon the scholarly writings of jurists and academics relative to these contexts. How to study religions in academically sound ways is the topic of chapter two. Provided are brief descriptions, leading questions, and summary guidelines for each of the following nine disciplinary approaches for religion studies: visual arts, music, literature, geography, anthropology, sociology, psychology, history, and phenomenology of religion. The third and last section of the handbook discusses some of the dominant values implied in this approach to public school religion studies and proposes six teaching strategies. (Author/RM)

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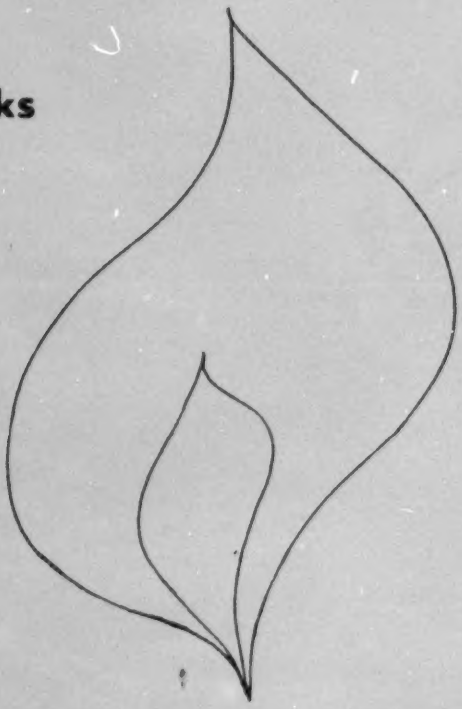
STUDYING THE SACRED IN THE SCHOOLS

A HANDBOOK FOR THE ACADEMIC STUDY OF RELIGIONS

Henry J. Hoeks



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A MONOGRAPH SPONSORED BY
THE COUNCIL ON THE STUDY OF RELIGION IN MICHIGAN SCHOOLS

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This is Publication Series I, No. 1. The Council on the Study of Religion in Michigan Schools, realizing the lack of curricular materials for teaching religion-studies in elementary and secondary education, seeks to encourage their production and field testing. To assist in this task, the CSRMS is sponsoring a series of publications dealing with public education religion-studies. The Council does not officially endorse the positions taken by any author but hopes these publications will facilitate further discussion and scholarship.

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Preface

This monograph defines four major dimensions of the academic study of religions in public secondary schools. These dimensions--legal, ethical, academic or disciplinary, and pedagogical--each deal with selected issues of potential concern to classes in religion studies. Guidelines which attempt to encapsulate and summarize the discussion of the major issues are developed in each dimension. The guidelines are meant to be provocative and illustrative, not prescriptive or definitive. The major objective is to provide a handbook of legal, ethical, academic, and pedagogical concerns which are pertinent, though introductory, to the academic study of religions. The handbook was designed particularly for use by Michigan educators, especially pre-service and in-service teachers of religion studies in public secondary schools, although it can be adapted readily to other locales and levels as well.

Chapter I deals with the first two dimensions of concern to the local religion studies classroom, these being the legal and ethical dimensions. In this chapter, I discuss how students and teachers may attend appropriately to the law of the land, as interpreted by the United States Supreme Court, and relate responsibly with each other in an ethical environment when studying religions and religious phenomena.

Chapter II addresses the third dimension of this handbook--how to study religions in academically sound ways. I assume the validity and propriety of using many disciplines to examine the religions of man and religious phenomena. This chapter sets forth brief descriptions, leading questions, and summary guidelines for each of nine disciplinary approaches deemed particularly appropriate for religion studies.

Chapter III encompasses the preceding dimensions and discusses how legally appropriate, ethically responsible, and academically sound

religion studies can be implemented in a pedagogically feasible and practical way. Three particular values which arise out of the previous chapters are emphasized, and ways to realize these values, including six strategies for teaching religion studies, are proposed.

A plurality of concerns, academic approaches, and teaching strategies is consistent with my contention in this handbook that diverse local community conditions, varying teaching styles, and differing student characteristics and conceptual levels all ought to be honored when one creates educational environments, selects curricular approaches, and arranges content and processes in religion studies.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the Council on the Study of Religion in Michigan Schools for providing financial assistance toward the publication of this monograph. The views of and approaches to religion studies herein are those of the author, however, and are by no means necessarily those of other Council members or their respective higher educational institutions which comprise the Council. In supporting this first of a projected series of monographs, the Council demonstrates its intent to exercise leadership in this developing area of the curriculum and to provide secondary school personnel with resource material which may be helpful in advancing legally appropriate and academically sound religion studies in Michigan schools.

Other grateful acknowledgements must be made of the excellent editorial and clerical contributions of Lois Sterenberg; the typing expertise of Sandra Geerdes and Gayle Cruzan; and the self-giving support of Caroline, Sandy, and Jeff, who made it possible for me to write the dissertation which fostered this monograph.

Calvin College
July 1976

Henry J. Hoeks

I. Legal and Ethical Issues and Guidelines

The academic study of religions, not unlike sex education and instruction in partisan politics, is a potentially explosive and extraordinarily sensitive venture for the public schools. This is so partly because religion studies touch the most fundamental and personal preferences of human existence and commitment. Since teachers, pupils, parents, and administrators frequently are passionate possessors of principles rooted in personal primary beliefs, there is much potential for strife and misunderstanding. When a community and classroom are comprised of a heterogenous mixture of pivotal values and religious traditions, as is increasingly the case in our urbanized contemporary society, the possibility of destructive conflict increases.

Many are the pitfalls and obstacles along the paths to studying religions in public education. There are ambiguities involved in legal opinions regarding the role of religion studies in the schools. Authoritarianism lurks in the recesses of the insecure, inept, or unprofessional aspects of the minds of teachers of religions despite good intentions. Frequently, strong personal preferences are coupled with a tendency to trespass upon beliefs and rights of others in the interest of evangelism or conformity. Complexities are inherent in study of alien cultures, and there is unfamiliarity with the topography of non-Judeo-Christian ways of being religious. There is difficulty in maintaining a middle course between the Scylla of cold, detached factuality and the Charybdis of indoctrination and evangelism.

In the not-too-distant past, two major approaches were taken to hurdle such pitfalls and obstacles. The traditional approach was to instill common-denominator, basically Protestant, beliefs and practices in students in the name of moral and value education,

thereby making the schools virtually *de facto* Protestant. The United States Supreme Court theoretically closed this avenue by erecting a legal barrier on the basis of the "no establishment" clause of the First Amendment. The other approach, taken by some educators in reaction to the legal barrier and specter or presence of many other obstacles, was to detour or declare off-limits all discussion and study of religion in the public classroom. This route, however, was and is an erroneous one, as a consideration of the substance of the Supreme Court opinions on religion and education will demonstrate shortly.

Since the 1950's a third approach has been slowly mapped out, this being the academic study of the nature and role of religions in human civilization. The chasms and obstructions are still present. Some legal and ethical ambiguities remain; misunderstandings and conflict are still very possible. But a more firm starting point has been established in certain legal decisions by jurists, in proposals for alternative approaches to religion studies forwarded by the academics, and in the design by educators of some educational models and strategies particularly well-suited for use in religion studies. If these developments are extracted from the scholarly literature and interpreted for teachers and students, some of the difficulties in the study of religions may be ameliorated. The remainder of this chapter and the following two chapters are thus devoted to the description of approaches to the academic study of religions and subsequent development of legal and ethical, disciplinary, and pedagogical guidelines.

Perhaps the most formative agency in the United States presently concerned with religion studies in secondary and higher education is the Public Education Religion Studies Center (PERSC), housed at Wright State University. PERSC has published a guidebook in which rather general guidelines for developing competency in public education religion studies are outlined by their Professional Advisory Committee and staff personnel. According to the *PERSC Guidebook*, being "well-versed in the legal issues surrounding religion studies in public education" and "non-confessional in approach" are two criteria for competency in religion studies. These criteria are explained somewhat as follows:

Understanding of legal issues is demonstrated by a thorough knowledge of the U.S. Supreme Court decisions as well as state and local laws pertaining to religious practices and religion studies in the public schools and of the parameters suggested by these laws for academic study of religion in the public schools.

A non-confessional approach to religion studies is demonstrated by:

1. a pluralistic approach;
2. self-knowledge about one's religious and value commitments, about one's attitudes toward formal religion, and about one's religion biases and cultural limitations so as to be free to present fairly and discerningly various religious options and to teach about religions without proselytising for one's own position;
3. openness to and empathy for alternative religious and non-religious points of view among students and a willingness to listen to them and accept their feelings and underlying beliefs; and
4. dedication to building a sense of human community through cultivating an understanding of and respect for all people and an appreciation of our common humanity in the midst of our diversities.[1]

This chapter builds upon these rather skeletal criteria and amplifies them, expands upon them, and attempts to go beyond them in providing a more substantive discussion of some major legal and ethical issues involved in the academic study of religions in public schools.

The legal dimensions have occupied a rather significant place in the development of religion studies in the public schools of the land. The first portion of this chapter provides an overview of some basic legal issues. Less prominent has been discussion of the moral or ethical questions concerning the nature of interactions between teacher and students of religions and between persons of diverse religious heritages and how persons deal honorably with the curricular materials which present accounts of the religions and religious phenomena of a variety of world cultures. What is involved in a moral or ethical environment in which religion studies may comfortably and profitably be pursued? How is the tension between commitment to one's own tradition and desire to know about and learn from other religions to be handled? What role does the teacher play in maintaining an

[1]Peter Bracher et al., *PERSU Guidebook* (Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio: Public Education Religion Studies Center, 1974), pp. 11-12.

ethical environment? These questions are explored in the second portion of this chapter.

The intent of the writer in this chapter, therefore, is two-fold: (1) to consider the legal and ethical contexts in which the academic study of religions may take place in Michigan public schools; and (2) to present guidelines based upon the scholarly writings of jurists and academics relative to these contexts.

Legal Guidelines

Any understanding and citation of the legal status of religion studies in the schools must, at bottom, refer first to the foundations in the United States Constitution. Then one can proceed to the interpretations of the Constitution handed down in the decisions of the Supreme Court relative to specific cases which the Court considered.

The Legal Basis

Neither the First Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1791, nor Section One of the Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868, are explicit regarding the relation of religion and the schools. However, plaintiffs and judges have detected implicit directives within the scope of these amendments, especially the first section in the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . . ." In time, the "Due Process Clause" found in the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments (". . . nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law") was extended to the First Amendment and became operative in judicial considerations. Hence, not only Congress, but also the States must refrain from establishing or prohibiting religion.[1] Since the public schools are agencies or institutions under the jurisdiction of the States, by further inference and deduction it may be argued that the schools may not establish or prohibit the free exercise of religion. However, the practices of the schools were not consistent nor uniform regarding the

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[1]David E. Engel, ed., *Religion in Public Education* (New York: Paulist Press, 1974), p. 11.

place of religion. In fact, that there has been a very confused and checkered history of the practice and study of religion in the public schools has been well documented by Robert Michaelsen, among others.[1] It was not until the middle of the twentieth century that more definitive clarification of the relationship of religion and education was provided by the Supreme Court.

Prior to the key Supreme Court decisions (which will be referred to later), a committee of the American Council of Education offered several clarifications regarding the relationship of religion and public education. Many of the following points anticipated the Court's subsequent action:

1. The problem is to find a way in public education to give due recognition to the place of religion in the culture and convictions of our people while at the same time safeguarding the separation of church and state.
2. The separation of American public education from church control was not intended to exclude all study of religions from the school program.
3. Teaching of a common core of religious beliefs in the public schools is not a satisfactory solution.
4. Teaching of 'moral and spiritual' values cannot be regarded as an adequate substitute for an appropriate consideration of religion in the school program.
5. Teaching which opposes or denies religion is as much a violation of religious liberty as teaching which advocates or supports any particular religious belief.
6. Introducing factual study of religion will not commit the public schools to any particular religious belief.
7. The role of the school in the study of religion is distinct from, though complementary to, the role of the church.
8. The public school should stimulate the young toward a vigorous, personal reaction to the challenge of religion.
9. The public school should assist youth to have an intelligent understanding of the historical and contemporary role of religion in human affairs.[2]

Some more definite directions were to come from opinions of a few Supreme Court Justices and the Michigan Attorney General in cases relating religion studies to public education.

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[1]Robert Michaelsen, *Piety in the Public School* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1970).

[2]American Council of Education Studies: Reports of Committees and Conferences, XI, No. 26 (Washington, D.C.: American Council of Education, April, 1947), pp. 49ff, quoted in Niels C. Nielsen, Jr., *God in Education* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966), p. 50.

The Legal Interpretations

The Supreme Court decisions, and key statements within the written opinions of a few crucial cases, constitute a kind of Magna Charta for the cause of legally appropriate teaching about religions in the public schools. Of fundamental significance are the following cases:

Everson v. Board of Education, 330 U.S. 1, (1947)
McCollum v. Board of Education, 333 U.S. 203, (1948)
Zorach v. Clauson, 343 U.S. 306, (1952)
Engel v. Vitale, 370 U.S. 421, (1962)
Abington School District v. Schempp and *Murray v. Curlett*, 374 203, (1963)

Much analysis has been given to the issues and decisions in these cases. Summaries and discussions of these key cases abound in the literature.[1] More germane to this study, perhaps, are key statements made in the texts of the Justices' opinions. These statements delineate the Court's interpretations of the relevant parts of the U.S. Constitution regarding religion in education which have been called into question by the appellants in the cases.

In the *McCollum* case, Justice Jackson emphasized the importance of religion(s) as influencers of world culture and contemporary society:

> . . . But it would not seem practical to teach either practice or appreciation of the arts if we are to forbid exposure of youth to any religious influences. Music without sacred music, architecture minus the cathedral, or painting without the scriptural themes would be eccentric and incomplete, even from a secular point of view . . . . The fact is that, for good or for ill, nearly everything in our culture worth transmitting, everything which gives meaning to life, is saturated with religious influences, derived from paganism, Judaism, Christianity--both Catholic and Protestant--and other faiths accepted by a large

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[1] See, for example, dissertations by Charles J. Mishler, "An Inquiry into Religion in the Public School with Guidelines Relating to Voluntary Religious Expression and Teaching About Religion" (Ed.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1967); Thomas F. O'Donnell, Jr., "Religion, Basic Education and the First Amendment: The Supreme Court from Fuller to Warren" (Ph.D. dissertation, LeHigh University, 1973); Timothy J. Boggs, "An Analysis of the Opinions in the United States Supreme Court Decisions on Religion and Education from 1948 through 1972" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Colorado, 1973).

A handy and accurate summary for administrators and teachers on legal matters is the American Association of School Administrators booklet, *Religion in the Public Schools* (New York: Harper & Sons, 1964).

part of the world's peoples. One can hardly respect the system of education that would leave the student wholly ignorant of the currents of religious thought that move world society for a part in which he is being prepared.[1]

In the majority opinion of the *Schempp-Murray* case, Justice Clark spoke to what ought to be included in any good and complete education:

> . . . In addition, it might well be said that one's education is not complete without a study of comparative religion or the history of religion and its relationship to the advancement of civilization. It certainly may be said that the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historic qualities. Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistent with the First Amendment.[2]

Justice Brennan touched not only on what was not forbidden but what was necessary for meaningful teaching. In many respects the statement is an echo or reenforcement of the Jackson statement cited above:

> The holding of the Court today plainly does not foreclose teaching about the Holy Scriptures or about the differences between religious sects in classes in literature or history. Indeed, whether or not the Bible is involved, it would be impossible to teach meaningfully many subjects in the social sciences or the humanities without some mention of religion. To what extent, and at what points in the curriculum religious materials should be cited, are matters which the courts ought to entrust very largely to the experienced officials who superintend our Nation's public schools.[3]

In another concurring opinion in *Schempp-Murray*, Justice Goldberg touched on the idea of "neutrality" and on a distinction between teaching *about* and teaching *of* which some have found to be a helpful one:

> It is said, and I agree, that the attitude of the state toward religion must be one of neutrality. But untutored devotion to the concept of neutrality can lead to invocation or approval of results which partake not simply of that noninterference and noninvolvement with the religious which the Constitution commands, but of a brooding and pervasive devotion to the secular and a passive, or even active, hostility to the religious. Such results

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[1] U.S., Supreme Court, *United States Reports*, McCollum v. Board of Education, 333 (1948):235.

[2] Ibid., Abington v. Schempp and Murray v. Curlett, 374 (1963): 225.

[3] Ibid., p. 300.

> are not only not compelled by the Constitution, but, it seems to me, are prohibited by it.
>
> Neither the state nor this Court can or should ignore the significance of the fact that a vast portion of our people believe in and worship God and that many of our legal, political, and personal values derive historically from religious teachings. Government must inevitably take cognizance of the existence of religion and indeed, under certain circumstances the First Amendment may require that it do so. And it seems clear to me from the opinions in the present and past cases that the Court would recognize the propriety of the teaching *about* religions, as distinguished from the teaching *of* religion, in the public schools.[1]

From the perspective of the United States Supreme Court, therefore, the academic study of religions is not only permissible but desirable in the nation's schools. How, then, have religion studies been viewed in the State of Michigan?

A careful search by the writer of Michigan's latest educational code, "The School Code of 1955," uncovered no reference whatever to the study of religion in the curriculum. Yet Article VIII, Sec. 1 of the 1963 Constitution of the State of Michigan, in a statement borrowed from the Northwest Ordinance, intimates that religion should be a proper concern of education: "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary for good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." The question was more how religion and the Michigan schools were to be related.

In the light of the United States Supreme Court interpretations of the federal Constitution, the Michigan Constitution of 1963, and the opinions of Attorneys General of other states, the Attorney General of the State of Michigan, Honorable Frank J. Kelley, issued an opinion regarding the inclusion of religion studies in the school curriculum. The conclusion of his search was, "Courses in religion given as part of a secular program of education are not prohibited when presented objectively. The attempt to indoctrinate towards any particular belief or disbelief is prohibited."[2]

In summary, then, neither the United States Constitution, as interpreted by the Supreme Court, nor the Constitution of the State of

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[1] Ibid., p. 305.

[2] Frank J. Kelley, "Constitutional Law: Schools: Opinion No. 4405," Lansing, Michigan, 10 September 1965, pp. 1 and 16.

Michigan prohibits the academic study of religions in the public schools. In fact, in its 1963 *Schempp-Murray* opinion the Supreme Court stated that public education would be regarded as incomplete without the academic study of religions within the study of cultures and civilization.

Guideline 1. *Since the contribution of religions to civilization is one of the crucial keys to understanding human history and civilization, the latter being a fundamental concern of education, schools and teachers should ensure that the academic study of religions be part of the curriculum.*

The Central Issue in Religion Studies

Several key words or phrases which appeared in the previous excerpts must now be examined a bit more closely before additional guidelines are presented. Such key concepts include: "neutrality," "when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education," "teaching *about* religion as distinguished from the teaching *of* religion," "religious influences," "comparative religion or the history of religion," "the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historic qualities," "such study of the Bible or of religion," "teaching about the Holy Scriptures or about differences between religious sects in classes in literature and history," and "impossible to teach meaningfully many subjects in the social sciences or the humanities without some mention of religion."

Of the legal concept of "neutrality," La Noue says:

> Legal neutrality is not value-free, nor does it require that the State's policy be balanced precisely at the midpoint of the claims of all the contending interest groups . . . . Legal neutrality toward religion is, instead, a state policy of refraining from weighing the scales of religious choice by refusing to commit the state's prestige or resource to either help or hinder religion. To use the Classic phrase, neutrality requires that the state not intervene in the marketplace of ideas on behalf of any of the forces of religion or irreligion contending there. Since the public school is the central marketplace of ideas in our democracy particular care must be taken to see that the scales of religious choice are not weighted in the classroom.[1]

Wolterstorff, in the same collection of essays cited above,

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[1]George R. La Noue, "The Conditions of Public School Neutrality" in *Religion and Public Education*, ed., Theodore R. Sizer (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1967), pp. 25-26.

makes a closely reasoned case for the concept of "affirmative impartiality." He argues that the State, and hence the schools, cannot hope to achieve absolute or full neutrality. The state can work toward affirmative impartiality in which its purpose should not be to lend support or opposition to any religion or irreligion by what it says or does; furthermore, that whenever one of the state's legitimate purposes can be achieved without violating the tenets of some religion or irreligion, it be so achieved.[1]

How, then, is the academic study of religion to be carried on in the public school? The Justices used phrases such as "when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education"[2] and "teaching *about* religion as distinguished from the teaching *of* religion."[3] In a formative article to which the writer is personally greatly indebted, Phenix contends that:

> The central issue in the study of religions in the explicit sense is the meaning of objectivity and the means of attaining it. The Supreme Court found no constitutional bar to objective teaching about religion in public education.[4]

On the contrary, the Justices encouraged such teaching and regarded objective religion studies as an essential, though problematic aspect of a complete education.

That the problem of objectivity is indeed the central issue for public education about religions can be seen in a review of the literature. No fewer than eight scholars addressed themselves to this one issue in the Sizer book alone.[5] Virtually every resource consulted on this topic touched on the issue. The tendency has been to apply the emphasis on "objectivity" to religion more than other disciplines and studies. But the same, no greater or lesser,

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[1] Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Neutrality and Impartiality" in *Religion and Public Education*, ibid., pp. 3-21.

[2] Mr. Justice Clark in U.S., Supreme Court, *United States Reports*, Schempp-Murray, 374 (1963):225.

[3] Mr. Justice Goldberg, ibid., p. 305.

[4] Philip H. Phenix, "Religion in American Public Schools" in *Religion and the Public Order (1966)*, ed., Donald A. Gianella (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 86.

[5] Sizer, *Religion and Public Education*.

standards of "impartiality" (that is, relative neutrality) and scholarship with "delimited subjectivity" (relative objectivity) should be applied to religion studies as to other areas of inquiry in the curriculum. Though some attention will be given later on to the methodological and pedagogical implications of "when presented objectively," suffice it to say here that in the context of that phrase coined by the Court, the Court apparently wished to distinguish between "devotional," "kerygmatic," or "doxological" exercises and instructional or academic activities.[1] Thus "teaching of religion" carries connotations of creedal, catechetical, and ceremonial teaching--that of indoctrination. This kind of teaching fails the "when presented objectively" criterion of the Court regarding the purpose or primary effect of teaching religion studies in the public schools because it has as its purpose conversion to or induction into a faith community and as its primary effect the confessional advancement of religion. Devotional and doxological exercises are regarded as worship and thus also prohibited. There is no place for indoctrination of any sort in public education, either through direct instruction or indirectly through cultic practices.

"Teaching *about* religion," however--using the words of the Court's opinion--is to be academic in nature and, as such, is assumed to make use of the commonly accepted canons of scholarship, of which "critical" and "appreciative" study are a part. Michaelsen elaborates:

> By "critical" I mean that the primary goal of such a study is accurate knowledge and that all available tools and resources are used to that end. I add "appreciative" since Americans often understand "critical" only in the sense of adverse criticism. What is sought is genuine understanding, a sympathetic entering into the subject with the goal in mind of trying as best one can to see it as it is.[2]

The purpose of instruction about religions "when presented objectively" is so that religious literacy may be attained through a fuller *understanding* of the diversity and impact of human beliefs and practices. The methods must be those of "secular" rather than "religious" education.

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[1]For these particular terms I am indebted to William C. Tremmel, "Did the Courts Really Say That?" in *Religion Teacher's Journal* 5 (July-August 1971):6-8.

[2]Michaelsen, *Piety in the Public School*, p. 265.

James V. Panoch contrasted academic and confessional approaches in these effective, though somewhat simplistic, couplets:

The school may sponsor the *study* of religion,
but may not sponsor the *practice* of religion.

The school may *expose* students to all religious views,
but may not *impose* any particular view.

The school's approach to religion is one of *instruction*,
not one of *indoctrination*.

The function of the school is to *educate* about all religions,
not to *convert* to any one religion.

The school's approach to religion is *academic*,
not *devotional*.

The school should study what people *(do)* believe,
but should not teach a pupil what he *should* believe.

The school should strive for student *awareness* of all religions,
but should not press for student *acceptance* of any one religion.

The school should seek to *inform* the student about various beliefs,
but should not seek to *conform* him to any one belief.[1]

These couplets tend to be simplistic in that the distinctions drawn are frequently in actuality very subtle and blurred. In any case, motivation is a crucial factor. A test of motivation and objective for any proponent of religion studies in public schools is to determine if either the purpose or the primary effect is intended to be the advancement or inhibition of a particular religion or irreligion. If such advancement or inhibition is the purpose or primary effect, it is contrary to the First Amendment and therefore illegal.

Guideline 2. *The school is to be impartial regarding any religion or irreligion. Objectivity and academic inquiry in religion studies must be of the same nature and extent expected in other areas of the curriculum. Indoctrination in or persuasion toward any belief or disbelief is prohibited.*

The Content of Religion Studies

Once the motivation and direction for study about religion has been established, questions regarding specific content may be considered. If one grants that the school must be affirmatively impartial regarding religion in the curriculum, what kinds of curricular considerations did the Court regard as appropriate to the academic study of

[1] Bracher et al., *PERSC Guidebook*, p. 2.

religions? Perhaps the broadest statement is that of Justice Jackson's "nearly everything in our culture worth transmitting" in *McCollum* quoted previously.[1] Of this statement, Young contends:

> The import of this argument is that teaching about religion is both inevitable and implicit in any but the most restricted conception of the scope of the school's responsibility for rendering an account of human culture. Since the schools undertake to interpret man's cultural heritage to pupils, they cannot justify the elimination from consideration any significant aspect of that heritage, whether on account of the difficulties its presentation involves or for any other reason. To do so is to expose youth to the very dangers of distorted understanding which the schools undertake to correct.[2]

The "wall of separation" is not to be regarded as so formidable that no mention of religion whatsoever may be made in the curriculum. In fact, the very opposite is true, in that the Court has affirmed that meaningful teaching and education, building upon good scholarship, must take "religious influences" into account wherever and whenever appropriate in the curriculum. Therefore, teaching regarding the influence of religions upon culture, in the judgment of both the Supreme Court and the Commission of the American Association of School Administrators, is to be encouraged and even required. The curriculum ought to actively recognize and reflect the impact of religion, in both its institutional and individual manifestations, and of religiously based beliefs and practices as forces which have affected man's history and total cultural existence.[3]

Essential to an understanding of the positions taken by the Supreme Court and the American Association of School Administrators Commission is recognition of their explicit commitment to religious pluralism in the United States. Though in the Court's texts the words "religion," "comparative religion," and "history of religion" are usually in the singular, these words are referring to "paganism, Judaism, Christianity. . . and other faiths accepted by a large part of the world's populations" and the multitude of beliefs which are

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[1] Above, pp. 6, 7.

[2] William Y. Young, "Teaching About Religions in Secondary School Social Studies" (Ed.D. dissertation, Teachers College - Columbia University, 1968), p. 33.

[3] Cf. *Religion in the Public Schools*, pp. 29-30.

found in "civilization."[1] Justice Brennan also recommended teaching "about the differences between religious sects."[2] Thus the existence of many religions and faiths of man is recognized, and pluralistic study is advocated.

This pluralistic posture was noted by Charles Mishler in his dissertation. After studying the pertinent Supreme Court cases, Mishler derived the following guidelines among others:

1. The public school curriculum may include teaching:
   a. About the Bible and other religious books.
   b. About the differences between religious sects in classes in literature or history.
   c. About the contribution of religion to society in the various social sciences or the humanities.
   d. A course in comparative religion.
   e. About religion as a discipline or body of knowledge.
   f. The Bible as literature.
   g. About moral issues and training in how to make moral decisions throughout the process of learning.
2. Official documents such as the Declaration of Independence that make reference to Deity may be studied and recited in the public school.
3. Officially espoused anthems that include the composer's profession of faith in a Supreme Being may be sung and studied in the public school.
4. Shared time or dual enrollment plans are acceptable means of providing for religious education and spiritual training.
5. A complete education will include an objective study of the Bible and religion.[3]

This writer concurs with most of these guidelines but prefers to delete or change some for the following reasons. Specifically, the Court did not mention whether the study of comparative religion ought to take place in "a course" or a unit of a course, nor did it refer explicitly to "religion as a discipline or body of knowledge." Moreover, it is debatable whether the Court had in mind the emerging discipline which has become known as the academic study of religion. Furthermore, not only officially espoused anthems that include the composer's profession of faith may be sung or studied; any anthem may be studied and sung, if the activity is part of an academic exposure

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[1] U.S., Supreme Court, *United States Reports*, Schempp-Murray, 374 (1963):225.

[2] Ibid., p. 300.

[3] Mishler, "An Inquiry into Religion," pp. 51-52.

to religious music in world culture. Also, the shared time or dual enrollment issues are not directly germane to this study. Finally, the Court's language was not demanding "an objective study of the Bible and religion" but rather advocating that the data of the Bible and religions be presented objectively, that is, impartially, honestly, and fairly.

The substance of Mishler's guidelines may thus be reformulated into these summary suggestions regarding curriculum:

Guideline 3. *The content of pluralistic public school religion studies may include, but may not be limited to, the academic study of:*

a. *Religions of the world's peoples.*[1]

b. *Religious themes and influences in music and dance, art and architecture, and in other elements of human culture.*[2]

c. *Sacred writings, including the Bible, for their literary and historic qualities.*[3]

d. *The differences between religious sects where appropriate to the study of literature or history.*[4]

e. *The contributions of religion to culture where appropriate to the study of social sciences and the humanities.*[5]

f. *Units or courses in religion whenever and wherever they are intrinsic to learning in the various fields of study.*[6]

g. *History of religions and comparative religious phenomena.*[7]

These curricular suggestions, rooted in the legal literature and opinions cited above, become in general the basis of the sequence and substance presented in Chapter II of this study--"Disciplinary Issues, Approaches, and Guidelines."

Local Autonomy in Religion Studies

As was intimated above, the United States Supreme Court was

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[1] Mr. Justice Jackson in U.S., Supreme Court, *United States Reports*, McCollum v. Board of Education, 333 (1948):235.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Mr. Justice Clark, ibid., Schempp-Murray, 374 (1963):225.

[4] Mr. Justice Brennan, ibid., p. 300.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Hon. Frank J. Kelley, Attorney General Opinion, pp. 1 and 16.

[7] Same as footnote 3.

not, nor did it intend to be, prescriptive or exhaustive regarding the content or scope of teaching about religions in the public schools. The Court realized that it should not attempt to impose uniform curriculum and teaching standards on the nation's schools. Such an imposition would exceed both the competency and the jurisdiction of the Court. Justice Brennan said as much when he opined in *Schempp-Murray* that the Court should entrust to public school officials--meaning the state educational authorities and boards--the decisions about the extent and points at which religious material should permeate the curriculum.[1] Thus a fundamental freedom and responsibility of local school boards, so crucial to the nation's concept of public education, was reiterated. The final legal guideline proposed, consistent with the Brennan opinion and decentralization policy of the State of Michigan Department of Education, emphasizes local autonomy in the study of religions and reinforces the limitations of the guidelines already stated in this chapter.

In developing course proposals, these guidelines may be adopted or adapted or, of course, rejected in the interest of local needs and conditions. Furthermore, within the limits of the First Amendment as interpreted by the Supreme Court and delineated in the preceding pages, there is freedom to employ a wide variety of units, courses, disciplinary studies, and pedagogical approaches and materials in public school religion studies.

Guideline 4. *In keeping with the legal limits of the First Amendment and the general pattern of local autonomy in United States and Michigan public education, particular proposals for the academic study of religions in the curriculum are the prerogative of the teachers and boards of local schools.*

Ethical Guidelines

A careful perusal of the recent literature on teaching will show that there is an emerging arena of consideration in pedagogical theory and practice which is concerned with the social aspect of the school's environment. Suppose, for example, that a local school board

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[1] Above, p. 7.

has received a proposal from some school personnel to incorporate the academic study of religions into the secondary school curriculum. Suppose further that the school board has approved the proposal with the proviso that curriculum and teaching in the academic study of religions are to be informed by or follow the legal guidelines suggested previously. School personnel are now charged to develop in detail the proposed course of study. The tendency in contemporary education has been to proceed immediately to the technical consideration of goals, objectives, organization of content, and strategies or means to achieve ends. However, recent critics of curriculum theory and practice have pointed out the limitations of technical and scientific valuing to the exclusion of, for example, aesthetic and ethical valuing.[1] We now consider some ethical issues involved, specifically in religion studies.

Toward an Ethical Environment

The contention here is that there is a concern prior to technical curricular considerations for those school personnel who wish to attend to the reality of the school situation. At stake are the privileges, rights, and responsibilities of students to each other and to school personnel, the obligations of the teachers and the school to the students, and the environment in which education is to take place. An ethical environment is defined here as an educational setting in which all persons are promised opportunities for growth in understanding the world, others, and self, and all are assured of interpersonal relationships which guard and honor the rights and responsibilities of all present. This moral and ethical concern is particularly poignant in subjects as sensitive and potentially explosive as the study of religions in the schools (though such concern ought to be manifest throughout the total school situation). Ethical valuing in religion studies is considered here because it seems to be closely related to the legal issues; it has an almost quasi-legal character. That is to say that though one may assent to the legal

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[1] See, for example, Dwayne E. Huebner, "Curricular Language and Classroom Meanings," in *Language and Meaning*, eds., James B. MacDonald and Robert B. Leeper (Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1966), pp. 11-14.

decisions, opinions, and guidelines given, there are yet sufficient ambiguities involved in the realities of schooling, the ways teaching activities in religion studies may be organized, and the kinds of attitudes students and teachers may exhibit, so as to result possibly in an environment which is unethical and immoral, if not illegal, unless a deliberate effort is made to shape and exist in an ethical social setting.

In *The Common Goals of Michigan Education* booklet, a full section is devoted to goals related to creating a suitable environment in the schools. The first section is reproduced here entirely for convenient reference.

I. CITIZENSHIP AND MORALITY

Michigan education must create an educational environment which fosters the development of mature and responsible citizens.* Three goals have been identified in this area:

Goal 1--Morality
Michigan education must assure the development of youth as citizens who have self-respect, respect for others, and respect for the law.

Goal 2--Citizenship and Social Responsibility
Michigan education must assure the development of mature and responsible citizens, with the full sense of social awareness and moral and ethical values needed in a heterogeneous society. It must encourage critical but constructive thinking and responsible involvement, with consideration for the rights of all, in the resolution of the problems of our society. It must create within the school system an atmosphere of social justice, responsibility, and equality which will enable students to carry a positive and constructive attitude about human differences and similarities into their working or community relationships in later life. The schools should provide various learning experiences involving students from different racial, religious, economic, and ethnic groups; accordingly, Michigan education should move toward integrated schools which provide an optimum environment for quality education.

Goal 3--Rights and Responsibilities of Students
Michigan education must recognize and protect the individual and legal rights of students as people and as citizens, regardless of race, religion, or economic status. Together with these rights students must accept responsibilities and disciplines essential to our society. Implicit in this goal is the recognition of the corresponding rights of parents, teachers, and other participants

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*The Constitution of the State of Michigan reads: Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.

in the educational process.[1]

Another ethical dimension is found in the second section of *The Common Goals* under the title "Democracy and Equal Opportunity" as follows:

> *Goal 1--Equality of Educational Opportunity*
> Michigan education must ensure that its processes and activities are so structured as to provide equality of educational opportunity for all and to assure that there is no institutionalized oppression of any group, such as racism where it exists. It must also provide for an educational environment conducive to learning. The system must assure that all aspects of the school program--including such matters as educational goals, organization of schools, courses, instructional materials, activities, treatment of students, attitudes, and student and community representation--give full cognizance and proper weight to the contributions and participation of all groups within its structure. The school climate should accomodate the diverse values of our society and make constructive use of these values for the betterment of society.[2]

Readily apparent from even a cursory reading of these goals is the emphasis on an educational environment which is conducive to personal growth toward maturity. The fundamental mark of such an environment is that of justice--the fair, honest, even-handed interactions between all persons who, with curriculum content and processes, comprise the educational setting. In the context of religion studies, a just environment is one in which empathetic appreciation of and respect for diverse positions and heritages are fostered.

> Implicit in our system of government is the principle that no one religion or group of religions may dominate, but all must honor the religious convictions and practices of others. To tolerate is not enough. Honoring our differences means making room for them. It means understanding and valuing people for their differences, not merely focusing on surface similarities. It gives support to a genuinely intercultural education--one which strengthens mutual understanding and respect. In the long run, informed respect will strengthen the individual cultures themselves.
>
> The public schools, as agencies of civil government, must be neutral with respect to the claims of the many religions and philosophies to the devotion and faith of their followers. At the same time they are charged, along with the civil government itself, with the responsibility to provide an environment in which practices and values that are rooted in the homes and

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[1] State (of Michigan) Board of Education, *The Common Goals of Michigan Education* (Lansing: Michigan Department of Education, 1971), p. 3.

[2] Ibid., p. 4.

churches can flourish. It is in response to this double duty that school policies that are truly constructive must be formulated.[1]

The writer contends that constructive formulations conducive to an ethical environment must not be limited to school *policies*, but extended to classroom *practices*. The very practices and interactions within the classroom, particularly one in which the religions of man are being studied, must be carried on in a just and ethical manner if the full impact of pluralistic religion studies is to be perceived, felt, enjoyed, and absorbed.

Knowledge of moral and ethical values, therefore, "can be interpreted as embodied in environmental form, and that it (such knowledge) does not simply reside in, or is 'learned' by a person."[2] It is gained by experiencing the elements of a total environment. We turn, then, to consideration of the components which constitute the environmental form.

Ethical Components

What would be some of the particular elements of an ethical environment relative to the academic study of religions? At least four major interrelated components must be considered: the students, the teachers, the multi-faceted phenomena and dimensions of the content of religions, and the strategies for attending to the study of these facets of religions. The latter two components comprise the subjects of Chapters II and III respectively. Of particular concern here are the students and their beliefs, the school personnel--especially teachers--and their attitudes, and the ways students and teachers interact with each other in the study of religions. The ethical quality of classroom interactions, especially where differences in religious opinion, commitments, and practices surface, may be the most powerful effecter in religion studies, particularly if empathetic appreciation, discerning understanding, and responsible reflection

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[1] American Association of School Administrators, *Religion in the Public Schools*, p. 28.

[2] Dwayne E. Huebner, "Curriculum as the Accessibility of Knowledge," a paper presented to the Curriculum Theory Study Group, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2 March 1970, p. 3. Parenthesis is the writer's. (Mimeographed.)

are significant educational values in those studies.

Perhaps the most basic component is a commitment of school personnel to honor the sanctity, integrity, individuality of each person, to respect the inalienable rights of each student to believe as conscience and religious commitment compels, and to encourage religious self-understanding and understanding of others' perspectives on life. As the study of religions uncovers the plurality of beliefs and practices, extreme care ought to be exercised to honor the heritages and commitments--or conscious lack of commitment--of each and every person, present and past. By precept and practice, students may be encouraged to esteem their own rearing, individuality, and religious tradition, to respect the faith realities of others, and to honor the law of the land which seeks to protect the religious freedom of each person.

> A moral person affirms the worth and dignity of other persons in his attitudes and actions. He takes responsibility for his decisions and for the consequences of those decisions. He values his own freedom of conscience and respects the freedom of conscience of others. He has a capacity for self-evaluation and is willing to admit error and to alter his views. The morally committed person holds and expresses his own moral convictions and beliefs, and respects the diverse views of other individuals and groups.[1]

A just environment, then, is characterized by such concerns as dialogue, caring, promise, forgiveness, service, beauty, vitality, and justice.[2] Educational activity in religion studies which cares for individual persons, to paraphrase Huebner, promises them growth opportunities in their study of persons, religious groups, and phenomena of religions in world cultures past and present, provides for conversation and dialogue with others regarding alternative perspectives on life, forgives when errors in ethical responsibility are made

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[1]Moral Guideline Implementation Committee, *Handbook on the Legal Rights and Responsibilities of School Personnel and Students in the Areas of Moral and Civic Education and Teaching About Religion* (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1973), p. 1. Twenty-four of thirty-two pages are devoted to legal issues, moral and ethical values, and rights and responsibilities of school personnel and students.

[2]These concerns are articulated poetically by Dwayne E. Huebner, "Moral Values and the Curriculum," paper presented at the Conference on Moral Dilemma of Public Schooling in Madison, Wisconsin, 12 May 1965.

or promises unfulfilled thereby freeing teacher and student for new possibilities, serves each student primarily rather than societal, academic, or bureaucratic concerns first, offers each person safety to risk--to venture and defend--his opinions and beliefs without being destroyed or attacked personally. A just environment is one which accomodates and respects the integrity and tradition of each student. Personal beliefs and heritages are held up as objects of beauty to be reflected upon. Opportunities are provided for individual growth with respect to one's own tradition, for development of respect for others' religious heritages, and for group growth in handling creatively tensions between differing beliefs.

A fundamental ethical orientation in religion studies begins with genuine concern for each particular student. Each person should be assured not only that personal convictions will be esteemed but also that opportunities will be provided to develop in religious self-understanding in the light of how others from many cultures have understood and expressed themselves religiously. Understanding of the variety of man's religions and cultural religious expressions may be gained through the conceptual frameworks and methodologies of the disciplines suggested in Chapter II. Self-understanding may be enhanced by reflective consideration and comparison of one's religious heritage with other heritages. One writer stated the importance of religious self-understanding this way:

> . . .the student must be encouraged and enabled to grow in his self-understanding. Without this no meaningfully ordered world can arise for him, i.e., no world to which he can relate himself in a meaningful way. He must learn to become aware of his attitudes, convictions, beliefs, doubts, motives for action and decision, values, etc. All of these are mediated to him through the self-understanding of other human beings, individuals or groups, and expressed in a variety of ways of which the most important and "concrete" are associated with the areas of literature, art, philosophy, ethics, and religion. By understanding the meaning-structures underlying the self-understanding of others, the student is enabled to more fully understand himself, to "place" himself and hence to meaningfully and responsibly relate himself to the natural and cultural worlds in which he finds himself. This process involves decision making. While the school cannot make any decision as to the validity of any given meaning-structure on behalf of the student, it must enable him to make such decisions by himself and for himself. It should do this by confronting the student with the meaning-structure governing the self-understanding of others in such a way as to render their various claims to meaning-giving truth and value as genuine possibilities for himself

and for his adoption of them and identification with them.[1]

Ethical concerns are not limited, however, to the development of personal understandings. Group growth in religious literacy and inter-personal relationships is a concomitant concern. Respect for other heritages represented in the class and in society must be manifested in the quality of interactions between peers and between students and teachers if an ethical environment is to be maintained. The classroom decorum and basic rules for interactions ought to protect each person from religious prejudice and encourage each person to listen to others, to dialogue with others, to respect and care for the personal commitments and reasoned presentations of others. The atmosphere should be one

> . . .of social justice, responsibility, and equality which will enable students to carry a positive and constructive attitude about human differences and similarities into their working or community relationships in later life.[2]

In summary, the development of religious self-understanding and the cultivation of open and accepting attitudes toward the religious commitments, understandings, and heritages of others may be stated as follows:

Guideline 5. *An ethical environment is* established *when all participants in religion studies are committed to honor and respect the sanctity, integrity, beliefs, understandings, and religious (or irreligious) tradition of each person, including one's self, present in the classroom.*

Of equally basic significance to the creation and maintenance of an ethical environment are the teachers and their attitudes. Postman and Weingartner put it strongly:

> There can be no significant innovation in education that does not have as its center the attitude of teachers, and it is an illusion to think otherwise. The beliefs, feelings, and assumptions of teachers are the air of a learning environment; they determine the quality of life within it.[3]

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[1]Guntram C. Bischoff, untitled unpublished paper presented at the American Academy of Religion meeting in Washington, D.C., October 1974.

[2]State (of Michigan) Board of Education, *Common Goals*, Goal 2, p. 3.

[3]Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, *Teaching As a Subversive Activity* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1969), p. 33.

The attitudes of teachers are reflected in their classroom decorum, in their informal conversations with students, and in their own reactions to the subject matter of religion studies.

A democratic, not an autocratic, classroom is most appropriate in religion studies. The power to influence, so pregnant in the realm of religious meanings, may then be viewed as mutual between teacher and student. For the "I" to recognize an other as a "thou"--using Martin Buber's language--is to recognize the unique ability and equality of each person to exert and respond to an other's power to influence.[1] The teacher, always tempted by the power of position, and the radically committed student, similarly tempted by the cogency of conviction, share the obligation to respect the freedom of religious belief or disbelief and subjectivities of all others, especially those in the educational environment. Authoritarianism is inappropriate in such an environment. The posture of all participants, including the teacher, is rather to admit willingly the possibilities of others' positions, genuinely listen to them, empathetically appreciate and weigh arguments, alter one's own erroneous judgments, and forgive errors of others and self; in sum, to treat others justly, as one may expect to be treated.

The way the teacher attends to the selection of methodologies and curriculum materials is also an ethical concern. A conscientious and empathetic use of a variety of viable approaches to the religions of man and religious phenomena will characterize the quest in the classroom for comprehensive understanding of the religious heritages of the world. Furthermore, the selection of textbooks, instructional materials, and teaching strategies ought to be guided by the canons of legal appropriateness, academic soundness, and pedagogical effectiveness. Books and other media which cummulatively present a one-sided view or single religious perspective on life ought to be eschewed in public education. Rather, curricular resources should be selected for their promise to assist students to inquire and learn about several religions and differing perspectives--to learn in a way that aids students in perceiving value bases and differences, forming independent judgments, and reaching higher levels of understanding for and appreciation of man's

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[1] Huebner, "Moral Values and the Curriculum," pp. 11-13.

diverse religions. The succeeding chapters are intended to provide academically viable choices and pedagogically helpful suggestions for an ethically sensitive perusal of religions.

We live in a pluralistic, multi-faithed society. Therefore, to equip students (and teachers) to be socially just and responsible citizens in our society, the classroom can not merely be an instructional place where moral and ethical values rooted in religious convictions are *studied*, but also a microcosm or mini-community in which ethical relationships are *lived*, that is, practiced, and hence nurtured in the educational pursuit of religion studies. Individual differences in religious commitments and heritages should especially be cherished rather than melted down into a common-denominator perspective on life. A commission on Religion in the Public Schools said it this way:

> The power of the public school is in the opportunity it provides for the creative engagement of differences--differences in physical and mental capacities and characteristics, differences in background and culture, differences in the creeds men live by. This is a power not always understood, not uniformly supported, not invariably exercised effectively. Concern over the role of religion in the public school that leads to a lessening of that power weakens the very institution that serves a diverse society so faithfully. Concern that leads to improvement in the methods, materials, and competence with which the school deals with the role of religion is constructive.[1]

Suggestions for curriculum design and teaching strategies which value and constructively capitalize on religious differences in pluralistic public high schools are developed in Chapter III--"Pedagogical Values, Strategies, and Guidelines."

A summary regarding the maintenance of ethical interactions in the classroom may be stated as follows:

Guideline 6. *In the academic study of religions, an ethical educational environment is* maintained *when justice is practiced in all educational engagements between students, staff, and the subject matter of religions. A delicate balance must be struck between the teacher's responsible guidance of students toward achieving an empathetic but critical (discerning) understanding of alternative religious perspectives and each person's freedom and right to affirm and defend the perspective which that person values most highly.*

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[1] American Association of School Administrators, *Religion in the Public Schools*, p. 67.

II. Disciplinary Issues, Approaches, and Guidelines

In the preceding chapter some issues were discussed and six guidelines were presented with respect to legal and ethical matters involved in public school religion studies. Using again the jargon of the journey, the road has thus far seemed to be rather straight and narrow. Legal limits were "posted" quite explicitly, and the ethical environment was stipulated somewhat arbitrarily. However, both legal and ethical issues were informed and framed by the tenets of justice and responsible freedom which are fundamental to the United States Constitution and hence to this country's vision of an ideal society, of which the public schools are a part. The bumps and crevices and rough places have not disappeared; the road is not perfectly smooth and plain. Perhaps the guidelines presented so far will serve to alert fellow travelers to the potential problems and possibilities and prepare them more adequately for the next phase of the journey.

Once the legal and ethical issues have been considered, a series of junctures are soon encountered. Choices need to be made regarding methodological addresses and alternative avenues of approach to studying religions and their phenomena. The major concern of this chapter is a positive response elicited by Professor Phenix's call for a multi-disciplinary address to religion studies:

> . . .In declaring that their decision against prayers and Bible reading does not rule out objective teaching about religion, the Supreme Court justices surely did not mean to invite the introduction of Sunday school classes into the public schools. Instruction of this kind would be even more contrary to constitutional principles than the excluded religious exercises.
>
> It is clear then that the problem of religion in public education is not satisfactorily solved by simply inserting units on the Bible and religion, prepared by committed laymen, into the program of instruction. An educationally and theologically sound approach requires a much more thorough-going effort to integrate religion

> into the curriculum, using the best resources of professional scholarship in all the major branches of learning. Such integration cannot be effected by any short term crash program to prepare teachers and materials, but only by a long-range persistent effort, by scholars and educators in the several disciplines, to do justice to the religious elements in human culture and experience.[1]

That which follows is an attempt to assist disciplined inquiry into the multi-faceted aspects of the religions of man and their phenomena by providing several alternative perspectives through which the facets may be viewed. An effort has been made to use reputable--if not "the best"--resources of professional scholarship in several disciplines applicable to religion studies in secondary schools. Furthermore, the content of this chapter seeks to implement to a significant degree a policy recommended by a Commission of the American Association of School Administrators in its 1964 report:

> The desirable policy in the schools, as the Commission sees it is to deal directly and objectively with religion whenever it is intrinsic to learning experience in the various fields of study, and to seek out appropriate ways to teach what has been aptly called "the reciprocal relation" between religion and the other elements in human culture. The implementation of that policy calls for much more than an added course, either for teachers or for high school curriculum itself. It requires topic-by-topic analysis of the separate courses, and cooperative efforts by the teachers to give appropriate attention to these relationships.[2]

The assumption on which this chapter proceeds may thus be stated as follows:

Guideline 7. *Both teachers and students should develop a basic understanding of and an ability to use the methodologies of several disciplines in studying the many facets of religious phenomena and their contributions to human culture.*

It is perhaps not redundant to emphasize again that the perspectives proffered and the style in which the perspectives are presented are by no means intended as indisputable statements of "the way things are." The perplexity involved in adequate presentation and handling in a few pages, let alone in many pages, of such a large

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[1]Philip H. Phenix, "Religion in American Public Schools," in *Religion and the Public Order (1965)*, ed., Donald A. Gianella (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 84.

[2]American Association of School Administrators, *Religion in the Public Schools* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 61.

array of perspectives from which religions may be viewed is formidable. The kind of challenge in this chapter was expressed by J. Robert Oppenheimer when he said in a different, much earlier, context:

> The problem of doing justice to the implicit, the imponderable, and the unknown is of course not unique to politics. It is always with us in science, it is with us in the most trivial of personal affairs, and it is one of the great problems of writing and of all forms of art. The means by which it is solved is sometimes called style. It is style which complements affirmation with limitation and with humility; it is style which makes it possible to act effectively, but not absolutely; it is style which, in the domain of foreign policy, enables us to find a harmony between the pursuit of ends essential to us and the regard for the views, the sensibilities, the aspirations of those to whom the problem may appear in another light; it is style which is the deference that action pays to uncertainty; it is above all style through which power defers to reason.[1]

The orientations, style, and use of language chosen by the writer in this chapter are not to be interpreted as exhaustive and limiting but rather as tentative, aimed at provoking teacher and students toward their own creative adaptations of disciplinary approaches. Admittedly, there are several orientations possible in each discipline. Each orientation presented reflects a perspective of the major source(s) selected by the writer and, as such, represents certain hermeneutical presuppositions and points of view, both on the part of the author of the sources and the writer's understanding and use of the sources.

The style and language herein are intended for ease of use by the readers. Much description is compressed into as few pages as seemed feasible, with the possible danger that the discussion may at times appear cryptic or authoritarian. Such an effect is not intended, however. The effect desired is that of curiosity being rewarded by convenient summaries of conceptual frameworks which may be paralleled, compared, and contrasted in order that informed decisions may be made regarding the disciplinary approaches appropriate to subject matter at hand. The guideline statements are intended to be rather abstract, general summaries which "point to" some salient features of the discipline when applied to the academic study of religions. The disciplinary guidelines may also serve pedagogical purposes in the form of "advance

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[1] Quote from a speech in 1947 and in Walker Gibson, ed., *The Limits of Language* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1962), pp. 50-51.

organizers" as suggested in Chapter III.[1]

The content of this chapter, then, presents several disciplinary approaches or avenues which can be taken in academically studying the phenomena of the religions of man.

Disciplinary Approaches to Religion Studies

What are some disciplines and their respective methodologies appropriate to the study of religions? In seeking to answer this question, the writer makes no claims to being exhaustive. That is, not all of the disciplines conceivably appropriate to the study of religion will be examined. The most frequently named and used disciplines reported in Gorr's research and the surveys by Ponstein and the writer will be included.[2] These surveys indicate that the majority of courses in which religions are studied are in secondary school departments of literature, history, and social studies. In addition, a few disciplines which teachers occasionally use, and which the writer deems potentially fruitful when applied to the study of religions, will also be considered. Other studies of reports from teachers indicate, for example, that artifacts and audio-visual materials presenting art and architecture, music and dance are also frequently used,

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[1] See particularly pages 91-95.

[2] Alan Gorr, "The Teaching of World Religions in the Public High School of the United States: A Critical Evaluation of the Curricular Materials in Current Use" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1971), based upon pp. 132, 137, and 240-242.

Lambert J. Ponstein, Professor at Hope College in Holland, Michigan, conducted a survey of 580 senior high schools in the fall of 1973. In an untitled report, dated 12 October 1973, Ponstein stated that of the senior high schools represented in the response to the survey, 96 schools offered a total of 104 courses. At least 4,200 students were enrolled in these courses, the great majority of which were about evenly divided into "World Religions" or "Comparative Religions" and "The Bible as Literature" courses. Regarding the answer to the question "When did you first offer a course in religion?," Ponstein reports, "We can say with some degree of accuracy that 89 schools have introduced courses in religion in the last five years, or approximately one out of every seven senior high schools."

The writer conducted a more extensive follow-up survey in the fall of 1974. Nineteen additional senior high schools were found to offer religion studies. A growing number of junior high schools were also offering units on religions.

thereby justifying consideration of the fine arts or humanities. Personal reflective documents, such as autobiographies, meditations, confessions, and the like may also be introduced on occasion, providing some of the basis for including psychology of religion description and analysis. The disciplines which will be considered are the visual arts, music, literature, geography, anthropology, sociology of religion, psychology of religion, history and phenomenology of religions. The order of this list reflects the writer's intent to proceed from the disciplines which study the more concrete, particular artistic expressions of religions to those which are more synoptic and universal, such as history and phenomenology of religions.

The format for presenting the disciplines in this study consists of three aspects for each discipline. The first aspect will be a description of the representative concerns of the discipline applied to the study of religions. The second aspect will explore some of the particularly appropriate questions students and teachers could ask when using the discipline in the process of analysis and understanding of religions and their manifestations in human culture. These two aspects are based upon the belief that

> Information by itself does not produce knowledge; conceptual analysis is necessary. That is what "discipline" means, in academic terms: the investigation of phenomenon in accordance with a previously developed set of concepts and techniques which together form a coherent whole and can give useful meaning to the study of the materials it chooses. A discipline must ask particular questions and seek particular understandings.[1]

The third aspect will be a summary of the prior two aspects given in the form of a general guideline statement.

Visual Arts of Religions

Description. Religious and liturgical expressions of the visual arts (including painting, drawing, graphic arts, sculpture, and architecture) are creative depictions of ultimate concerns and commitments, credos, and cultic practices of a religion. These arts present in concrete visual form some of the most profound and captivating reflections of man's understanding of his existence in relation

[1]Rhoads Murphy, *The Scope of Geography*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1973), p. 112.

to that which he affirms to be transcendent. The visual arts have been used by religious man in many ways. These ways include use of magical fetishes or objects to meet basic life-needs, portrayals of deities for protection, veneration of deities by means of images and icons, representation of ritual acts, commemorative depiction of mortuarial customs and beliefs, communication of conceptions of the divine, enhancement of worship and edification of adherents, and instruction in and transmission of the faith.[1]

To understand the art expressions of any people, among whom religion inevitably plays a key role, students must examine the art forms of that people within their particular historical, geographical, and religio-ideational context. One humanities text has it said well:

> A positive approach, then, can be established on the coincidence of *time*, *place*, and *idea*. Artists, while working in separate fields, are an integral part of a society, living within a certain geographical and temporal center, and collaborating in varying degrees with each other and with the larger social group. The closer the coincidence, the closer the relationship will be. Composite works of art--forums, monasteries, cathedrals, operas--are always collaborative in nature and must be made to express the several interests they are designed to serve. Liturgical needs, for instance, have to be taken into account in the designs of a cathedral, and the sculpture and pictorial embellishments must fit into an iconography, or symbolic program, and the overall architectonic plan of the structure. Hence in one *time* and in one *place*, the arts of architecture, sculpture, painting, music, and liturgy share a common constellation of *ideas* in relation to the contemporary social order and its spiritual aspirations.[2]

While the ideational context in which the art form is significant, so are the intents of the artists which seek to reflect or influence societal values. Bolam has provided this typology: the artist as illustrator, visionary, decorator, and magician. The illustrator desires to produce a record; the primary focus is on fidelity to nature or a viewpoint. The visionary desires to provoke social and moral understanding; the emphasis is on inspiration and powerful statements or overstatements for impact which will right societal wrongs or shake a placid status quo. The decorator seeks for beauty and craftsmanship; taste, harmony, form, and other aesthetic elements are

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[1] S.G.F. Brandon, general ed., *A Dictionary of Comparative Religion* (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1970), p. 100.

[2] William Fleming, *Art, Music, & Ideas* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1970), p. 11.

especially cared for and exhibited. The magician seeks to stimulate and to move the divine to action or portray religious experience; motive, and sensuous power reside in the form.[1]

Some aesthetic questions. Particular technical design questions are: What is the material or medium used in the art form? In what ways do the material and the medium express the message? What do the following express--lines and pattern; the design; the texture of materials; the shape; the colors; the contrasts of light and shade; sense of volume or mass; depth; perspective?

What is the overall effect of the composition as a result of the foregoing? If the art form is a building, what is the relation of the structure to its natural and man-made environment? What is the relation of form and function?[2]

Some questions of interpretation and meaning are: What is the approximate date and place of the art work? What are some of the major motifs or beliefs at that date and place?

What is the content or subject matter of the art form? Is it imitational or representational? Does the artist seek to be illustrator, visionary, decorator, or magician? What religiological or theological concept or feeling seems to be expressed? How is the art work reflective of either a major theme or the genius and spirit of the religious tradition, considering the historical particularity in which it was created?

What emotional and psychological effect do you experience in response to the art work?

Additional questions may be found in student's books and teacher's manuals of secondary curricular materials which address the study of the art and architecture of religious traditions.[3]

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[1]David W. Bolam and James L. Henderson, *Art and Belief* (London: Hamilton, Hamish, 1968), p. 21.

[2]Cues for questions taken from Philip H. Phenix, *Realms of Meaning* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964), pp. 152-164, and Fleming, *Art, Music, & Ideas*, pp. 9-12.

[3]See, for example, the unit on "Analyzing the Influence of Religion on Art" in Byron G. Massialas and Jack Zevin, *Religious-Philosophical Systems*, World History Through Inquiry Series. (Chicago: Rand McNally, & Co., 1969), Teacher's Manual and Student Booklet; the unit on "Chinese Painting" in John U. Michaelis and Robin J. McKeown, coordinators, *Asian Thought*, Asian Studies Inquiry Program (San

Summary statement. Guideline 8. *An approach to religion studies via the visual creations of religions is designed to acquaint students and teachers with the depictions of beliefs and ultimate commitments of a particular people. It encourages appreciative and empathetic viewing of the ways artists used materials in individual compositions. Furthermore, it entails imaginative reflection upon the emotions, ideas, and religious commitments expressed in and through the visual arts of a particular time and place.*

Music of Religions

Description. Religious music is the melodic, rhythmic, harmonic, and tonal expression of beliefs and commitments of a historical tradition through patterns of sounds and silences. Music presents in organized audic form some of the deepest and most moving emotions and conceptions reflective of a people's understanding of existence in relationship to that which they affirm as transcendent. Music has been a vehicle for religious expression throughout the ages. These expressions include the following: belief in the role of music for magical binding of divine power and its release,[1] belief in its reflection of the divine order or innately harmonic universe, responses of confidence in, love for, and obedience to the divine in private and communal devotion, commemoration of the stages and progression of life (including death), aesthetic storytelling of religious themes in cantata and oratorio, celebration of faith-group identity and solidarity, and the spiritual alleviation of burdens of work, frustrations of life, and yoke of oppressors.[2]

Throughout the history of religions, music has been created for emotive, conceptual, and aesthetic purposes.[3] The emotive aspect

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Francisco: Field Educational Publication, Inc., 1969), Teacher's Manual; the Teacher's Guide in several of the Sound-Slide Sets on religion produced by The Center for Humanities, Inc. (White Plains, New York: 1972-).

[1]Geradus van der Leeuw, *Sacred and Profane Beauty: The Holy in Art* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1963), pp. 213-216.

[2]Robert Hickok, *Music Appreciation*, 2nd ed. (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publ. Co., 1975), pp. 51-72.

[3]Brandon, "Sacred Music," *Dictionary*, pp. 457-460.

is most dominant in pre-literate cultures, especially when it is realized that music in these cultures is virtually concomitant with the rhythmical physical action of the dance, both of which are related to all of life. The combination of highly rhythmical and repetitive segments of melodies with the dance has commonly produced sensory responses and intensely emotional states within participants. Examples are the magical religions of Africa and of North American Indians and some contemporary religious movements.

In ancient but more developed civilizations in which rational considerations surfaced, the emotive aspect was blended with the conceptual dimension. The result was a movement from spontaneous participation in music to a more deliberate use of music in ritual and in texts associated with worship in holy places. Worshippers used music in liturgical settings to enhance their worship of the deity. Classical Chinese music is composed of a system of tones that reflect the cosmological order, with each of twelve tones representing the yin or yang and symbolizing hours of day or night and the revolving cycle of months in the calendar year. Ancient hymns from the Rig Veda, the source of much Indian melody and psalmody, are "sung as incantations to the divinities or as sacred sacrificial formulas" in order to ensure the stability of the universe.[1] Indian music also reflects the order and majesty of the universe in the way the ragas are ordered and associated with sacred motifs and thus contributes to the performer's own spiritual development. In the Islamic tradition the cantillations of the muezzin's call to prayer constitute the dominant form of religious musical expression.

In Western civilization, since 1600 A.D. and especially around the middle of the eighteenth century, the aesthetic dimension of music was developed highly alongside the emotive and conceptual dimensions of liturgical music. In these extreme forms of development, such as the great mass compositions, religious music was not primarily assigned for use in a liturgical setting or with the worship of the laity. Music became performative, the province of specialists, and the "audience" was cast into the role of passive listeners. Quite possibly this reflected a clergy-laity, grace-nature dualism in some Christian

[1]Hickok, *Music Appreciation*, p. 64.

theologies. Recent reformations in liturgy and worship practices have reacted against this passive aesthetic mode and have restored music to the prior position of ritual and lfturgical use by the worshipping people.

Again it must be stressed that the religious music of a people (that is, art which gives musical expression of a total perspective as embodied particularly in ideology and cult) must be examined in the light of the particular historical, geographical, and religio-ideational context of that people.[1]

Some musical questions. Representative questions of a technical nature are: What is the medium--vocal, instrumental, or both? How would you characterize the loudness--soft, medium loud, loud, combination? What is the number of performers--solo, ensemble, large group? What is the kind or style of the composition--chant, Indian raga, chorale, psalm, hymn, anthem, carol, spiritual, gospel hymn (folk song), oratorio, cantata, music for Mass, jazz, rock?

What can you discern of the following basic elements: Rhythm--regular beat (or pulsation) or irregular or indistinct; what speed or tempo? Melody--one melody, unaccompanied; melody with accompaniment; simultaneous melodies or range of melodies? Harmony--two tones (interval) or three or more tones (chord); consonant or dissonant? Tonality--central tone or atonal? Oriental or Occidental in origin?[2]

Some questions for interpretation and meaning are: What is the approximate date and place of the musical composition? What are some of the representative ideas and beliefs of the religion(s) of this time and place? What especially is the idea of time in the religion?

What sorts of instruments are used? Can you relate instruments to basic beliefs of the religion? For example, why is the drum used in African and American Indian religions, the organ in Christian religions, especially Roman Catholic and "high" Protestant, the vina and

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[1] Above, p. 31.

[2] Particular questions adapted from Neal M. Cross, Leslie D. Lindow, and Robert C. Lamm, *The Search for Personal Freedom*, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown Co., 1968), 1: 47-49; and Hickok, *Music Appreciation*, pp. 3-22.

sitar in Indian religions, the ch'in in Chinese Confucian religion?

If there is no text, what do you imagine the music is expressing; that is, what is the "musical idea" judging from patterns of accent, progression, repetition, and variation? If there is a text, what idea or belief is central to the text? How are the forms, ideas, concepts, or beliefs expressed reflective of either a major religious theme or the quintessence of the religious tradition, considering the historical particularity in which the music was composed?

What conceptions of divinity, humanity, and the world are implied or stated in the musical composition? Is the music simple or intricate and complex? For whose use is it designed--trained professionals or common folk? What are some of the religious implications of the compositional simplicity or complexity and the intended performers?

What sensory and emotional or psychological effect do you experience in response to this art work?

A limited example in which some of the preceding questions are applied to music of religious traditions is found in the previously mentioned unit on "Analyzing the Influence of Religion on Art."[1] The religion studies teacher could consult with music and humanities teachers for other appropriate resources.[2]

Summary statement. Guideline 9. *An approach to religion studies via the music of man's religions seeks first to acquaint students and teacher with a variety of modes of religious musical expression through appreciative and empathetic listening to the form and content of individual compositions. It also aims to stimulate imaginative reflection upon and empathetic participation in the emotions, ideas, and religious commitments expressed in and through the music of a people in a particular time and place.*

Literature of Religions

Description. The literature of mankind's religion includes

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[1]Massialas and Zevin, *Religious-Philosophical Systems*, pp. 35 and 36.

[2]See, for example, Beth Landis, *Exploring Music, The Senior Book*, Man and His Arts Course (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970).

the recorded mythologies, sacred texts, hymns, creeds, theologies, and commentaries of a religious people. These sources, encompassing a wide variety of literary genres, are the linguistic expressions of beliefs, ultimate concerns, and commitments. The sources include those texts which persons confess to be either divinely revealed directives or inspired responses to the experience of the holy, and systematizations of propositions believed to be true in reflection upon the existence of and relationships between divinity, humanity, and the universe.

The sacred texts of religions are foundational to the literate religions of mankind. They are venerated above all other literature of religions because these texts are generally regarded, to a greater or lesser degree, as being inspired by divinity and thus the words of divine authority. They are the authoritative sources from which the ideologies, teachings, and cultic practices of religions are drawn. Sacred texts present the "official" perspectives of religions and are the basis on which "popular" expressions are founded. Hence, the neophyte in religion studies can make no better beginning at understanding the genius and basis of a world religion than by studying portions of the authoritative texts of that religion. It is for this reason that the writer emphasizes texts regarded as sacred or set-apart by the adherents of religions.[1]

There are also many sources supplementary to and commentaries upon the sacred texts too numerous to mention, but nevertheless important for faith and practice. In addition, there is a whole body of literature which arises out of popular expressions of religious

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[1]The sacred writings of religions include the Book of the Dead, Coffin Texts and Pyramid Texts of the Egyptians; the several Hindu Shruti writings, including the Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, the Bhagavadgita, and the Smriti; the canons of Jainist sects; the Hebrew Bible and Talmud of the Jews; the Avesta scriptures of Zoroastrianism; Old and New Testaments and Apocrypha for Christians; the Quran (or Koran) of Islam; the Taoist canon called Tao-Tsang, including the Tao-Te-Ching ('Classic of the Way and Its Virtue'); the Ti-pitaka of South Asian Hinayana Buddhism; the many Mahayana and Vajrayna or San-Tsang of Mahayana Buddhism in China, Korea, and Japan; the Kojiki and Nihongi of ancient Japanese Shinto; and the Adi Granth Sahib of Sikhism. See Brandon, *Dictionary*, consult index. See also Gunter Lanczkowski, *Sacred Writings, A guide To The Literature of Religions* (New York: Harper & Row, Chapel Book, 1966).

convictions to which the advanced student may turn. However, for the reasons given previously and for the primary potential benefactors of this study (secondary students and teachers of world religions) consideration will be limited to the sacred writings and literature of religions. However, the writer indeed recognizes that in no sense do sacred writings exhaust the richness of the spiritual heritage of religious traditions or of mankind. Sacred writings are only the springboard to a spacious pool.

Essentially the same questions may be asked of the literature of religions as of other literary pieces. The method of analysis, especially for public school use, is that of literary scholarship in which the use of the tools of textual and higher criticism is essential. But one would be doing an injustice to the literature of religions if the study of such began or ended only with factual details about form and style. A more complete hermeneutical approach includes both a precritical reading of the literary piece and also a serious grappling with the meaning of the content, in addition to study of the literary details, form, and style.

In order for one to gain some understanding of the intended meanings of the canonical literature of religions, it is imperative that each work be read with appreciation for the contexts of its own claims to authority and the historical and cultural particularity in which it developed. One who desires to learn from the sacred texts is required to be open to and empathetic toward the pre-understandings and claims of the literature itself, *and* imaginative in envisioning the situation-in-life of the believers' community in and through which the literature emerged.[1]

Some literary questions. Representative questions for analysis include: What is the general thrust of the content or passage? What is the structure of the literature as it unfolds in time? What is the best text available?

What were the circumstances of composition? Who wrote what, to whom, when, why, and in what language?

Is the language of the composition intended to be literal or figurative? In what style or literary form is it written--poetry or

[1] Phenix, "Religion in American Public Schools," p. 103, and *Realms of Meaning*, pp. 176-185.

prose? Are archetypes evident such as romance or irony, comedy or tragedy? Are there specialized types used in particular cultures, for example, parables, apocalyptic writing, etc.? What bearing does the particular literary form employed have upon the way it is to be understood? What use, if any, is made of images, symbols, metaphors, and myths?[1]

Some questions of interpretation and meaning are: What was the author's intended meaning for the original hearers in their history and culture? What were the major alternative interpretations? *Why* does the writer say *what* is said in the very *way* it is said?

What idea of divinity, humanity, or the universe is presented? What concepts of salvation or ultimate transformation, ethics, cultic practices, community life, or personal experience pervade the composition?

How is the theme of the text an influencer, reinforcer, or antithesis of one or more major controlling or representative religious ideas of the community of faith at that time and place?

What similarities and differences are there relative to corresponding episodes in literature of other religions?

Does this composition speak to a universal human situation? If so, to what situation and how does it address that situation? What does the piece remind you of? To what, if anything, in your life does the piece correspond?

Additional questions may be found in secondary school curricular materials dealing with the literature of religious traditions. Since the discipline of literature appears to provide a wealth of resources, the few citations given here are merely illustrative.[2]

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[1]Several of these questions were suggested by Northrop Frye, *On Teaching Literature* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1972), and Rodney F. Allen *et al.*, *The Bible Reader's Guide* (New York: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1970), p. 11.

[2]See, for example, John R. Whitney and Susan W. Howe, *Religious Literature of the West* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1971); the unit on "Confucianism and Taoism" in Michaelas and McKeown, *Asian Thought*; James S. Ackerman, Alan W. Jenks, Edward B. Jenkinson, with Jan Blough, *Teaching the Old Testament in English Classes* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973); James S. Ackerman and Thayer S. Warshaw, *The Bible As/In Literature* (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1976), especially the Teacher's Resource Book; Alvin A. Lee and Hope A. Lee, *The Garden and the Wilderness* and *The Temple and*

Summary statement. Guideline 10. *A literary approach to the written texts of religions--including mythologies, canonical writings, and secondary documents--is designed to develop discerning understandings of their form and content through literary criticism and stimulate empathetic involvement in and imaginative reflection upon the meanings of the words, ideas, forms, emotions, and religious commitments in the literature of particular communities of believers.*

Geography of Religions

Description. In the academic study of religions, the discipline of geography is helpful in defining and delineating religious traditions. The religions of mankind both influence and are influenced by the culture and environment of a given people in a particular spatial setting. Therefore, it is important that the student of religion studies pay particular attention to the geographic contexts in which world religions develop.

According to a current scholar in the field, the distinct areas of analysis explored by geography may be summarized as follows:

1. The distribution and relationships of mankind over the earth and the spatial aspects of human settlement and use of the earth.
2. The interrelationship between human society and the physical environment as part of the study of areal differences.
3. The regional framework and the analysis of specific regions.[1]

The significance of geographical particularity in understanding the art, music, and literature of any religious tradition has been stressed in the sections immediately preceding this one.

With regard to the study of religions per se, a geographical delineation adds precision and specificity to any one tradition among the varities encompassed within the broad and general designations given to world religions. In his study and list of elements which he recommended be found in any curriculum for the academic study of religions, Gorr contended that "religions should be organized in a geographic manner unless course objectives and/or functional definitions

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the Ruin, Literature: Uses of the Imagination Series (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1973), student books and Teacher's Manual.

[1]Murphy, *Scope of Geography*, p. 5.

prevent this."[1] Thus it is more meaningful to speak of, for example, ancient Egyptian religion rather than "primitivism," Lutheranism in Germany rather than Reformation Christianity, Contemporary American Catholicism rather than Roman Catholicism, and Hindu beliefs in India and Pakistan rather than Hinduism in general.

Of equal importance is a knowledge of the physical environment in which a religion developed. Environmental understanding may be immensely helpful, even necessary, for understanding how the deities, mythologies, beliefs, religious practices and institutions of a people were influenced in part by, or were effecters of, the environmental context in which adherents were or are distributed and structured in time and space. In this context, teachers and students of religions should be aware of a contemporary reductionism known as "environmental determinism" which contends that the environment determines everything, or nearly everything, of mankind's being in the world. Such a reductionist perspective on the effect of geography upon values ought to be rejected, it seems to the writer, in favor of "possibilism," which honors the degree of choice and freedom open to human beings.[2]

Some geographical questions. Representative questions of a technical nature are: What and where is the cultural, religious, or political "region" (that is, a distinct areal unit) under consideration? What are the salient physical characteristics of the region? Which of the following environmental factors seem to have been most influential in the history of the region of the area: climate; plants; soils; water; landforms; natural resources; others? How might you explain your answer?

What expressions of religion effect the landscape (sacred structures, spaces, cemetaries, assemblages of plants and animals, etc.)?

Is there anything within the beliefs or rituals of the religion directly related to specific geographical areas? If so, what are they? When and with whom was their origin?

Some questions of interpretation and meaning are: In what ways has the physical environment influenced the culture and especially

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[1]Gorr, "The Teaching of World Religions," p. 115.

[2]Murphy, *The Scope of Geography*, pp. 9 and 58-59.

religion? How may the culture and religion have acted upon the environment? What was and is the significance of specific geographical areas in the religion's beliefs or rituals?

How has the physical environment aided or hindered growth and expansion of the religion? In what ways are patterns of interaction among the religion and other religious systems reflective of beliefs? In the comparative study of religions, how does one account for similar environments used differently or different environments used similarly?[1]

Summary statement. Guideline 11. *A geographical approach to the spatial settings of religions is designed to aid in the definition of a specific religious tradition, to develop understanding of the interrelationship between the physical environment and the religion of a particular time and place, and to explore the significance and meaning of environmental influences upon beliefs, practices, and cultural expressions of a geographically particular faith community.*

Anthropology and Religions

Description. When applied to the academic study of religions, the discipline of anthropology scientifically analyzes, studies, describes, and interprets the beliefs, symbols, and ultimate values of a culture and their structural patterns of religious practices and social behavior.[2] These beliefs and practices are seen in relation to the whole of human existence in a culture, including the physical environment (the "holistic" approach). The concept of culture as a way of life, which assumes that human functioning is acquired and learned behavior rather than instinctive or inherited, is fundamental to the anthropological methodology.

A leading cultural anthropologist has stated that "the basic features of a scientific anthropological approach to the study of religion are fourfold: universality, empiricism, comparison, and objectivity." By "universality" is meant the consideration and

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[1] See David E. Sopher, *Geography of Religion* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967) for an interesting and more detailed study of this topic.

[2] Annemarie de Waal Malefijt, *Religion and Culture* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1968), p. 6.

description of any and all known religions and religious phenomena of all cultures in their own terms. The consideration is "empirical" since the basic field research technique makes scientific use of data observed, measured, and recorded by trained participant-observers who examine religion in its total cultural context. When extinct cultures are studied, the techniques of archeology are used to reconstruct cultures on the basis of material remains in order to generate descriptions and explanations of these past cultures. Through later systematic "comparison" of similar phenomena, either in the same culture or comparable cross-cultural data, some generalizations may be made or typologies derived. An impartial and culturally unbiased study attempts to provide "objective" insights into the nature and meaning of the religious phenomena in the total context of a particular people in time and place.[1] Such a methodology is appropriate to both the study of specific groups of people or one specific phenomenon such as religion. It is applicable as well to a broad range of societies and cultures at every level of complexity.

Teachers and students of religion studies ought to be aware of some basic alternative anthropological presuppositions such as cultural materialism, which presupposes that the physical or material environment basically influences structural systems and religious world view; cultural idealism, which assumes that one's world view and beliefs are the keys to understanding structural systems and particular adaptations to the environment; and cultural relativism, which as a philosophical premise denies the existence or validity of transcultural values and moral absolutes and affirms that the validity of value systems is completely relative to the particular cultures in which they are found.[2]

Some of the specific concerns of an anthropological approach to religions involve examination of culturally different ways of dealing with perceptions of the divine or super-human; the forces of nature, disease and illness, the environment, the life-and-death cycle; mythological and symbolic creation; the rites of passage and

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[1] de Waal Malefijt, *Religion and Culture*, p. 3.

[2] I am indebted to a colleague, Professor Donald R. Wilson of Calvin College, for the substance of these alternative presuppositions.

intensification; individual and communal rituals of kinship and social ethics; the ways culture and religion are transmitted; and responses to change in religious beliefs or practices.[1]

Some anthropological questions. What is the culture's basic posture regarding the vicissitudes of life caused by forces supernatural, in nature, and in the physical environment? Is it believed that man basically can control or is controlled by natural and supernatural forces? Does the belief tend toward magical manipulation or toward supplication in cultic acts?

What are the particular myths, religious symbols, rites and rituals, both individual and communal, in this culture? How does the basic value orientation influence these myths, religious symbols, rites and ritual behavior of the particular people?

How is religion related to the life-cycle and rites of passage of the culture; to illness and healing; to death?

What are the interrelationships between religion, technology, economics, politics, marriage and family patterns, and moral codes? What are the specific functions of religion in these interrelationships? Of which other cultural elements is religion itself a function?

How are the beliefs, values, and practices communicated and transmitted to the young and to succeeding generations? What are the informal and formal religious nurtural and educational practices and institutions?

Who are the religious "specialists"? How do they function in the community?

What are the reciprocal relationships between culture and religion regarding cultural continuity and change? What are the religious motivations for, movements of, and responses to change in the culture?

What happened or happens to the religion of a culture when the culture comes into contact with other cultures with radically different world views and value orientations?

Some example of the ways in which these and other questions

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[1] Helpful in this regard were John H. Westerhoff III and Gwen Kennedy Neville, *Generation to Generation* (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1974), chapters 3, 5, and 10 and appendix 1; also the "Introductions" in William A. Lessa and Evan F. Vogt, *Reader In Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

are handled in social studies curriculum materials on a secondary level are cited below.[1]

Summary statement. Guideline 12. *An anthropological approach to the cultural manifestations of religions is designed to aid in understanding how the religious beliefs, values, and behaviors of a people in a given total culture (way of life) are patterned and acquired. Of particular interest are the reciprocal relationships between religion and the whole of the cultural essence and existence unique to a particular people.*

Sociology of Religion

Description. Applied to the study of religions, the discipline of sociology is concerned with the study, description, and interpretation of the religious dimension of human behavior and relationships within society, paying special attention to the structure and function of religious groups. Emphasis is on the meaning of interactions of persons and groups as the result of shared beliefs, regarding that which is perceived to be divine or of ultimate value, and practices consistent and in harmony with the transcendent beliefs.

A sociological study of religion in a society has two or three major foci.[2] Basic to other investigations is an answer to the question, "How are religion and society interrelated?" Involved first, of course, is the task of defining "religion" and "society." Depending on one's definitions, one can proceed to examine the interrelatedness of religion and society in simple preliterate societies, or in changing preindustrial societies, or in modern pluralistic societies.

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[1] See Robert A. Spivey, Edwin S. Gaustad, and Rodney F. Allen, *Religious Issues in World Cultures* and *Religious Issues in American Culture* (Menlo Park: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1976 and 1972, respectively); Massialas and Zevin, unit on "Comparing Marriage Ceremonies" in *Religious-Philosophical Systems*; and a course still in production at this writing by the World Religion Curriculum Development Center, St. Louis Park, Minneapolis, Minnesota, entitled, "Religion In Human Culture."

[2] The categories which follow were suggested in general by an article on "Sociology of Religion" in Brandon, *Dictionary*, pp. 583-587. Specific topics were obtained from a comparison of the contents in Glenn M. Vernon, *Sociology of Religion* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962) with the tables of contents of six other textbooks on sociology of religion published between 1970 and 1975.

A second focus is on the organizational frameworks within and through which these interrelationships take place. At the center of attention are religious commitments of individuals and their behaviors as members of religiously normed institutions. Of central importance also are the structures of religious organizations (sect, denomination, church, cult), religious organizations and social stratification, and the role of religion in dealing with potential social and individual disorganization and change. Of more peripheral importance are the interrelationships between religion and the institutions of marriage (and the family), government, education, and the economy. An essential part of the scientific inquiry in this second focus involves precision in definition of terms and conceptual schemes used in sociological analysis.

A third focus of the sociology of religion in modern pluralistic societies is on the concept and fact of "secularization," here defined as the process of a declining effective influence of religion upon areas of life. An inquiry into the existence and effects of secularization in the public schools of the United States would be most germane to religion studies as herein proposed.

The chief methodological approach of sociologists of religion is that of the scientific method (similar to that outlined earlier under "Anthropology") in analyzing the functions and effects of religious beliefs and practices upon individuals and groups. Many research procedures and tools are used. Hypotheses are drawn from existing theory to direct the search for desired data. Appropriate techniques for gathering data are used, such as careful observing, interviewing, questionnaires, sampling, etc. Tested devices such as indexes, rates, and systematic comparisons are utilized to analyze the data in order to arrive at some interpretations of the data and some conclusions regarding "what is or seems to be" not "what ought to be" or "what is right (or wrong)." This functional methodology is not without its problems, however, particularly as it pertains to its claim of high "objectivity" and its tendency toward naturalistic presuppositions.[1]

Some sociological questions. What are some of the top-line (of highest intensity) group norms operative in the group or society

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[1]Young, "Teaching About Religion," pp. 99-100.

under study? How has religion contributed to or strengthened these norms? What sanctions has religion provided?

What are the major groups in the society? What are the key or central religious group rituals and reinforcers?

What role does religion play in the socially prescribed patterns of behavior called "rites of passage"? How does religion deal with potentially disorganizing factors, such as adversity and suffering, war, natural disasters, frustrations, and successes?

What organizational patterns are found in the religious group(s) (for example, sect, denomination, ecclesia or church, cult)? What types of church polity or organization are manifest, especially for Western Christian religions?

Which of the following leadership patterns are apparent in the religious group(s): Prophet, messiah, priest, teacher, scholar, ritualist, healer, counselor, cleric, administrator, or other?

What are the membership patterns of the religious group(s)? What are the church preferences in a society? What are the patterns of participation (attendance, financial, sexual differences, age differences)?

What is the relationship between religious beliefs or groups and social stratification; religious discrimination; sexual discrimination?

What are the varieties of beliefs in the religious group(s) about marriage and family planning and responsibilities; about political life and responsibilities; about church-state relations; about schooling relative to public and private religious education? Compare and contrast religious beliefs of the religious group(s) relative to other societal institutions.

What, if any, signs of secularization are present in the society-of-the-whole? What meanings can you give to the signs? How does secularization affect religion studies in the schools?

Questions similar to these shape the essence of several curricular approaches designed to help secondary students to think sociologically about religion. A few examples of curricular materials are cited below.[1]

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[1] See Sociological Resources for the Social Studies, *Religion In the United States*, Episodes in Social Inquiry Series, (Boston:

Summary statement. Guideline 13. *A sociological approach to the study of religions is designed to provide relatively precise descriptions and explanations of the interactions of individuals and groups with respect to societal groups in which religious phenomena are apparent or prominent. Emphasis is placed upon religious group norms, structures, organizations, and patterns of behavior and the effects of such upon other societal institutions. Analysis of the process of "secularization" in modern pluralistic societies is also a focus of the discipline.*

Psychology of Religion

Description. When applied broadly to the academic study of religions, the discipline of psychology aims scientifically to describe, analyze, and interpret the psychic (perceptual, intellectual, emotional, and behavioral) processes and patterns of religious life. Special attention is paid to individual beliefs, feelings, and manifestations of commitment with respect to the transcendent and to others of the community of faith.

A brief discussion of three approaches to the study of the psychology of religion among many approaches which appear in texts on the subject may be helpful to the teachers and students who desire to make some use of this discipline. A classic though somewhat limited approach is that of James' Gifford Lectures in 1901-2.[1] While rightly emphasizing the varieties of religious experience rather than attempting to locate the essence of experience in one psychic function, James' tendency was to concentrate attention on the more extreme cases of subjective feelings using non-experimental fact-finding and description as his method. Psychologists of religion in the Jamesian tradition tend to concentrate on the more striking and extreme dimensions of religious belief and experience, conversion, spiritual growth, and aspects of dynamic religious life such as mysticism, charismatic

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Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971), Instructor's Guide and student booklet; Spivey, Gaustad, and Allen, *Religious Issues in American Culture* (1972) and *Religious Issues in Western Civilization* (1973); Massialas and Zevin, unit on "Examining Relationships between Church and State" in *Religious-Philosophical Systems*.

[1] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: The Modern Library, n.d.).

leadership, prayer, worship, and psychopathological preoccupations with messianism and demonism.[1]

A second approach, much broader than the first, is the phenomenological approach in which themes which recur in common everyday religious life are grouped under appropriate headings. The psychologist of religion taking this tack attempts carefully to "bracket" or suspend his biases and to observe phenomena with a kind of disciplined naïveté and child-like wonder. In addition to the phenomena mentioned in the first approach, other phenomena are considered, such as nonverbal communication, magic and persuasion, relation of revelation to sleep and dreams, habit and religious ritual, decision-making, conceptions of sin and forgiveness, commitment and alienation, loyalty and conscience, the expansion of consciousness, and religious ecstasy and the non-rational.[2] The phenomenal categories for psychological reflection are primarily religious issues.

A third methodological approach has as its ordering principles psychological, rather than religious, categories. Religious phenomena of all sorts are considered in primarily psychological terms, such as perceptual, intellectual, emotional, and behavioral processes, thought organization and linguistic functions, and interrelationships of persons with others, including a personal God, with things, ideas, and the self.[3] An advantage to the teacher using this approach may be some or extensive familiarity with organizing concepts gained from previous academic exposure to educational psychology.

Methods of study appropriate for neophytes in religion studies and in this complex and specialized discipline include reading and disciplined discussion of personal documents such as autobiographies, biographies, case studies, diaries, memoirs, confessions; some published protocols of interviews; some clinical studies of religious phenomena. Very cautious and tentative attempts could be made to transfer under-

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[1] See, for example, Walter H. Clark, *The Psychology of Religion* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1958) and Robert H. Thouless, *An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1971), especially chapters 10-15.

[2] Wayne E. Oates, *The Psychology of Religion* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1973).

[3] Paul W. Pruyser, *A Dynamic Psychology of Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

standings to one's own religious tradition and religious development and behavior, since a little knowledge here can be very dangerous to unstable persons. Students could more appropriately be guided in devising simple questionnaires, interviews, tests, or experiments designed to get at, very tentatively, some psychological dimensions of religious belief or programs.

Some psychological questions. What are some possible psychological roots of or needs for religion in general and of the particular religion under study? How are psychological drives such as anxiety, guilt, indecision, doubt, meaninglessness, weakness, conflict reduced or resolved religiously and integration achieved?

What seem to be the religious apperceptions of the nature of the divine or ultimate concerns of the religion? How do these views affect the depth and constancy of adherents' responses to the divine, to one another, and to ideas and things? How do these views of the divine and human nature affect self-concept? How is religious conversion explained? What are the roles of dreams, visions, mysticism, ecstasy, prayer, ritual?

How does the religion view the social and nurtural factors in the religious development of children and of adolescents (in societies where the latter are found)?

What kinds or categories of religious leaders are the "opinion-setters" of the religious tradition? What are the relationships between types of religious leaders, such as prophet, priest, intellectual, or mystic and the kinds of religious institutions in which they are found? What psychic categories does each type of leadership appeal to most, especially in worship and ethical behaviors?

What place and effect do sensory experiences have in individual and group worship and fellowship for members of the religion?

Are there one or more group "minds" in a religious tradition, such as the "mind" of safety, conservativism, militancy, social activism, progressivism, etc.? What "minds" can you identify and explain?

How may an examination of some psychological dimensions of religion(s) help in self-understanding?

As a rule, the discipline of psychology is not ordinarily taught on the secondary school level. Consequently, there appears to be a scarcity of suitable curricular materials having to do with

the psychology of religion.[1] However, a closely related area--that of moral education--is being developed for general education and deserves the close attention of secondary teachers interested in this new area of the curriculum.

Summary statement. Guideline 14. *A psychological approach to the phenomena of religious experience is designed to provide means for assessing the psychic factors operative in the acquisition, formation, and development of religious commitment and expression in both extraordinary and ordinary personalities who make up a religious tradition or group.*

History of Religions

Description. Applied to the study of religions, the discipline of history may aid one to uncover, represent, and provide a sympathetic understanding of the central events of religious traditions. The events constitute man's decisions and responses to his perception of transcendent revelation or his religious experience in particular settings.

> Summing up, history is the study of what human beings have deliberately done in the past. Its content is not, as in science, generalizations about observable occurrences, but particular events ordered temporally. These events are conceived as outcomes of personal existential decisions at particular times. Hypotheses about what happened are formed by the imaginative re-creation of the past, using relevant empirical knowledge from every field, together with personal understanding and ethical insight. Finally, these hypotheses are tested and progressively improved by checking them with effects of the past in the form of present evidence.[2]

The creative re-presentation of singularly important events in a religion's history makes use of all sorts of relevant sources. Such sources include oral accounts of eye-witnesses, sacred writings and auxiliary documents, general historical and religious contexts, archaeological discoveries and artifacts, anthropological, sociological, and psychological studies, artistic compositions which celebrate and interpret

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[1] Perhaps questions given in the foregoing section can be applied to certain biographical studies, such as "Gandhi" in Michaelis and McKeown, *Asian Thought*, and Roland H. Bainton's *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (Nashville: Abington Press, 1951 [paperback--New York: Mentor Books, a division of New American Library, Inc.]). Readings and study questions in introductory psychology of religion books, such as Clark, *The Psychology of Religion* may be helpful.

[2] Phenix, *Realms of Meaning*, p. 243.

the events, and the present popular expressions of the beliefs, concerns, and commitments of a particular people who are rooted in these events of a past time and place.[1] Consequently, the study of history is an integrative and synoptic discipline which potentially makes use of the subject matter and methodologies of several or all of the other disciplines presented for consideration in this chapter.

The word "event" is here understood as an effect or an outcome of human deliberation, decision-making, and subsequent actions particularly in relation to perceptions of divine revelation or will, to a particular religious experience, and to other humans or environment in a particular setting. "The object of historical inquiry is therefore to understand particular decisions that people made in the past."[2] The study of events in religious history is an attempt to deal honestly with the available sources, and to be faithful to the situation-in-life of the community of believers in which the responses to revelation were made. An attempt is made to get as close as imagination permits to the "insider's" religiological perspective, cognitive patterns, and affective commitments in order to understand proximately the meaning of the central or key events important to the adherent's religious perspective.

Under the heading of "History" as applied to religions may be included both the general history of religion, studied as the development of a universal human phenomenon, and the histories of specific religions in which are studied the major events and developments of particular religious traditions in their respective places and times. The former is of crucial concern to phenomenology of religion, described later. In the latter, scholars seek to study religions in their particular historical developments in order to determine the uniqueness and genius of the respective religions. Some comparisons between religious histories are assumed, of course, if uniquenesses are to be discovered and articulated.

Perhaps a caution is appropriate regarding what the study of

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[1] See, for example, Philip H. Ashby, "The History of Religions," in *Religion*, ed. Paul Ramsey (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), p. 29, and Joachim Wach, *The Comparative Study of Religions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 11, and Joseph M. Kitagawa, "The History of Religions in America" in *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology*, ed. Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1959), p. 19.

[2] Phenix, *Realms of Meaning*, p. 239.

history here understood is not. It is not the mere moralistic application of "lessons of the past." Nor is it only relating persons, institutions, and actions in temporal sequence, as in a chronicle. Finally, though general history and the history of religions are difficult to separate, especially in non-Western cultures and pre-baroque rationalistic Western civilization, primary emphasis is not on general historical developments of cultures or civilizations. Rather the emphasis here is on the history of one or another particular religion.

Some historical questions. Questions of a factual nature are as follows: What were the major crucial events in the religious tradition being studied? What are the details of the events as best as they can be reconstructed? Who were the key personalities involved? What sources, including literary material, are there to substantiate the events? What "periods" were the most likely temporal setting of the events? What was the geographical setting? What were the customs, objects of material culture, or major socio-religious relationships at the time-frame of the events? What economic or political forces were operative at the time? What formative prior historical events or situations-in-life impinged upon the participants' understandings, attitudes, decisions, and responses?

Some questions regarding historical interpretation and meaning are the following: What inferences and tentative hypotheses can be drawn from the evidence? To what extent do social, political, geographical, psychological, and economic considerations influence and contribute to the religious milieu? What seem to be the most crucial factors, the most reliable reports? What alternative hypotheses can be developed from the evidence concerning the impact of the events? What were the meanings of the events for the original participants? What significance did the events take on in light of the later religious history of the particular people? What alternative "stories" of the events and their religious meanings could be constructed on the basis of the hypotheses and their consequences?

If you were to construct an account of many interrelated events (that is, a "history") of a given religion, what events would you select and how would you classify and organize the data? What examples of other constructions of the history of one or more religions can you provide?

What major contributions have the religions made to contemporary

religious beliefs and practices?

What phenomena or themes or events of one religion are comparable to other religions? (See the next section on "Phenomenology of Religion" for suggestions about comparison of corresponding data.)

Several textbooks appropriate for use by secondary students of religions utilize questions or are organized around topics dealing with issues similar to those just mentioned. Some books follow a biographical approach; others offer surveys of the development of world religions; still others offer both. Again, the citations below are only illustrative.[1]

Summary statement. Guideline 15. *A historical approach to the central events of religions is designed to re-present with honesty and fidelity the most formative occurrences in each religion's history. This re-presentation is twofold: to uncover the evidences for the events and to develop understanding of the meaning of the composite factors which constituted the human responses to perceived divine revelation or will, to fellowman, and to the environment in a particular setting. The discipline of history both draws upon and serves the other disciplines in the interest of constructing orderly accounts of the inception and development of religion as a universal human phenomenon or of specific religious traditions.*

Phenomenology of Religion

Description. Some scholars of religion (occasionally known as religionists or religiologists) have of late been increasingly persuaded that religion is studied appropriately and adequately only by means of an autonomous discipline with its own object and method(s). The discipline is variously known as the comparative study of religion, science of religion, history of religions, *Religionswissenschaft*, or phenomenology of religion, depending in part on the geographical location in which the

[1] Selected resources include Herbert Stroup, *Founders of Living Religions* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974); E.G. Parrinder, *A Book of World Religions* (London: Hulton Educational Pub. Ltd., 1965), though the questions are simplistic and purely factual in thrust; L. Aletrino, *Six World Religions* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1968); Huston Smith, *The Religions of Man* (New York: Harper & Row, Inc., 1958); Stewart Dicks, Paul Mennill, and Donald Santor, *The Many Faces of Religion: An Inquiry Approach* (Canada: Ginn and Company, Xerox of Canada Ltd., 1973), in which are found numerous excellent historical questions for students to pursue.

discipline is pursued. In brief, the object of study of the discipline, here called phenomenology of religion, is the "universal phenomenon of religiousness"; the phenomenon of man as a religious being.[1]

When the word "phenomenology" or "phenomenological" is applied to the academic study of religions, what is meant by the term? An outstanding Norwegian phenomenologist of religion gave this definition:

> Phenomenology of Religion is the systematic treatment of History of Religion. That is to say, its task is to classify and group the numerous and widely divergent data in such a way that an overall view can be obtained of their religious content and the religious values they contain. This general view is not a condensed History of Religion, but a systematic survey of the data. The different religions present a rich variety of facts. The ritual acts and doctrinal tenets within each separate religion do indeed exhibit a certain similarity; they bear the stamp of that particular religion, but the religions differ in character from one another. The correspondences are only partial. History of Religion leads only to consideration of the particular; the over-all view that it gives, which we call general History of Religion, is not systematic or comparative. It is this systematic view that Phenomenology of Religion attempts to provide.[2]

Mircea Eliade, a scholar widely respected in Europe and in the United States, uses the terms "phenomenology of religions" and "history of religions" in their broadest senses. He includes under phenomenologists of religions "those scholars who pursue the study of structures and meanings" and under historians of religions "those who seek to understand religious phenomena in their historical sense."[3] Eliade contends that religious phenomenology "is the religious understanding of history; it is history in its religious dimension."[4] The two disciplines--phenomenology of religion and history--are seen as complementary aspects of the integral science of religions held together by a creative tension.

In its systematization of similar facts and phenomena encountered in known religions of the world, phenomenology of religion as a discipline therefore relies upon two basic methodologies. The first is the historical

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[1] Bischoff, "Toward the Academic Study of Religions in the Public School?--Reflections Occasioned by Recent Developments in Michigan," *Bulletin/Council on the Study of Religions*, II (April 1971) p. 9.

[2] W. Brede Kristensen, "The Meaning of Religion," in *Phenomenology of Religion*, ed. Joseph D. Bettis (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 36.

[3] Mircea Eliade, *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 8, footnote 7.

[4] Ibid., p. 9, footnote 8.

method used by historians of religions. Major events and data of different religions are examined in their respective historical settings and development in order to gather historical facts and understand them on their "own plane of reference," the fundamentally religious plane. That which is apparently unique and central to a religion and that which corresponds to data of other religions are uncovered and interpreted. The historically particular religions are the point of departure for the second method.

The second methodology, known as the morphological or phenomenological method, selects corresponding phenomena of religions out of their historical setting, assigns the phenomena names (classifies), organizes them according to common forms or types, compares similar phenomena in groups, and seeks to determine the underlying religious essence and meaning of a group of corresponding data. In turn, comparative consideration of corresponding data often yields deeper insights into a phenomenon of a particular religion than would be the case if the phenomenon was considered only by itself in its historical context. Thus the two methodologies are not independent of each other but rather are complementary.

In a sense, the phenomenology of religion is a synoptic discipline which makes use of any or all of the disciplines previously discussed in its religio-scientific quest for the essence of religious phenomena:

> While *Religionswissenschaft* is an autonomous discipline in the sense that it is not a composite of various disciplines concerned with the study of religions, it does not claim to be a self-sufficient discipline. That is to say, *Religionswissenschaft* depends heavily upon other disciplines, including both normative and descriptive studies of religions. For example, the descriptive aspect of the history of religions must depend on the disciplines which deal with the historical delineation of each religion. Moreover, the analytical aspects of the history of religions must depend on psychology, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, philology, and hermeneutics in its study of various features of religions, such as scriptures, doctrines, cults, and social groupings. This does not mean, however, that *Religionswissenschaft* regards itself as the queen of all disciplines dealing with the study of religions. It simply means that from the standpoint of *Religionswissenschaft* other disciplines can be regarded as its auxiliary disciplines. On the other hand, from the standpoint of a normative or descriptive discipline, *Religionswissenschaft* may be regarded as one of its auxiliary disciplines.[1]

[1] Eliade and Kitagawa, *The History of Religions*, p. 19.

A caution is in order regarding the "comparative" approach to the phenomena of religions. Phenomenology of religion does not try to compare religions with one another as total perspectives, especially not in order to assess the degree of greater or lesser development or value or validity of one religion in relation to another religion. Such a comparison does an injustice to both the autonomy and unique perspective of a religion and its adherents' convictions while inviting the kinds of value judgements and cultural or personal biases (such as occidental, evolutionist, or Christian) which the academic study of religions attempts to avoid.

Some phenomenological questions. Of the religions of man with which you are familiar (or you have studied or can research), name as many ideas, symbols, objects, persons, places, and practices which adherents believe to be manifestations of the holy or sacred as you can. Consider at least these questions: What is the divine? What is man? What is nature? What is "salvation" or "ultimate transformation"? What should one worship? How should one live? How is the religious group understood? How is it related to others in society?[1]

What is the meaning of terms used by phenomenologists of religion, such as mana, taboo, totemism, animism, myth, symbol, ritual?

What are some ways the almost infinite variety of religious phenomena or "heirophanies" (perceived manifestations of the sacred) could be organized and systematized? Into what common classification or forms may the phenomena be grouped?

What are some of the varieties of phenomena within groups? How do corresponding phenomena in a group differ among religious traditions? What seems to be common to all or most? What is the range, within a given tradition, of perceptions or expressions from "official" to "popular" religion? How are both important for understanding the phenomenon? How may one explain such varieties and ranges? How have phenomena within groups been re-evaluated or changed in value over time?

Some reputable scholars in phenomenology of religion have grouped phenomena under these types: for example, sun, moon, and sky symbolism; fire and water symbolism; sacred stones, places, time; earth, vegetation

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[1] These questions are based upon Appendix A in Robert C. Monk, et al., *Exploring religious Meaning* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), pp. 370-373.

and agriculture; rites of regeneration and fertility; myths, magic, prayer, sacrifices and offerings, rites of purification and initiation; kingship, divine form, and consecrated persons; soul and death, paradise and utopia.[1] Given a religion about which you are knowledgeable, attempt to relate the religion to these forms of phenomena. What clues to the overall conceptual framework of that religion would the meanings of several phenomena provide?

At the date of this writing, only a few textbooks suitable for use with secondary school students employ the phenomenological approach to religion studies.[2]

Summary statement. Guideline 16. *A phenomenological approach to the variety of expressions of religious beliefs and practices in the history of religions is designed to develop an overall view of the meaning of decisively significant phenomena. The search for meaning builds upon a historical understanding of specific religions, selects similar phenomena out of their known historical settings, groups them systematically, and compares the phenomena in terms of their common structures, meanings, and essence in universal religious existence and experience.*

Conclusion

This chapter on disciplinary guidelines can be summed up in a quotation with which the writer in principle agrees:

> Whatever the *tremendum* is and wherever it may be, our very act of erecting doors, covers, curtains, or screens helps make it an "it." What "it" is must be searched by any feasible method. If scientific hypotheses and tests can clarify it, so much the better. If ethical thought and action bring us closer to its character, we all stand to benefit. If art can hint at its form or capture its message, we will have some enjoyment. If mythological or poetic thought can help us fathom its depth, we learn at least to appreciate its grandeur. If religious thought can make its peculiar truth more articulate or meaningful, we may gain wisdom and understanding.

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[1] Compiled from Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (London: Sheed and Ward, Ltd., 1958), and Kristensen, "The Meaning of Religion," pp. 37-41.

[2] In the writer's opinion, Dicks, Mennill, and Santor's *The Many Faces of Religion: An Inquiry Approach* best approximates the phenomenological methodology. Teachers may also consider using excerpts from the many works by Mircea Eliade.

I see no reason why man at large could not use all these approaches at once. Indeed, I see no reason against any one person using them all at once.[1]

Nine disciplinary approaches were considered and guidelines proffered as alternative academic avenues feasible for use by teachers and students in studying the religions of man and their ideological, cultic, and social manifestations. The approaches were selected for their appropriateness to secondary school education and for their potential to stimulate students and teachers to become well-versed in a variety of disciplines, methodologies, and religious phenomena. The writer submits that those who would use several of the disciplinary approaches to religion studies suggested in this chapter will begin to meet the following criteria for academic competence established by the previously mentioned Professional Advisory Council and staff of the Public Education Religion Studies Center:

> B. Academic qualification in religion studies is demonstrated by
> 1. an adequate knowledge of religion in its formal and informal, institutional and non-institutional, communal and personal, inherited and experienced manifestations;
> 2. a knowledge of the diverse ways in which religion is expressed, such as ritual, myth, ceremony, festival, symbols, stories, music, and art;
> 3. awareness of and ability to use several different methods of studying about religion, such as the history of religions, the phenomenology of religion, the philosophy of religion, the psychology of religion, the sociology of religion, etc.; and
> 4. a knowledge of both the positive and negative functions of religion in human culture and history.[2]

At the very least, this chapter demonstrates that the phenomena of world religions are many-faceted and integrally involved with much subject matter in the school's existing curriculum. Religions and religious phenomena may be studied for their own sake and for their effects upon civilization, past and present, in a secondary education which endeavors to be, in the words used by the Supreme Court in *Schempp-Murray*, "complete."

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[1] Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology of Religion*, p. 339.

[2] Peter Bracher, et al., *PERSC Guidebook* (Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio: Public Education Religion Studies Center, 1974), p. 11.

III. Pedagogical Values, Strategies, and Guidelines

In the preceding chapters issues of legal, ethical, and methodological concern were discussed, and some guidelines were suggested appropriate to the academic study of religions in public secondary schools. A case was made in Chapter I for legally appropriate and ethically responsible religion studies. In Chapter II, alternative academic approaches to religion studies were advanced, with emphasis on a plurality of disciplines and methodologies through which world religions and religious phenomena may be studied. Thus, of the four major dimensions for public school religion studies proposed in this study, one--"pedagogically practical"--remains. Therefore the focus of this chapter is on concerns and guidelines more directly related to curriculum for, and instruction of, students in religion studies, particularly in the context of Michigan secondary education.

The intents of this chapter are these: first, to make explicit--again tentatively and illustratively, not definitively or prescriptively--certain dominant values implicit in the discussions of the preceding chapters; second, to consider how values envisioned and strategies suggested must be compatible with local curricular approaches, individual teaching styles, and differing student characteristics; and finally to propose ways to realize these values by matching legal, ethical, and disciplinary concerns and content with strategies for teaching selected for their appropriateness with respect to these concerns.

Values, defined as that which persons regard to be of most worth, may be realized from both direct instruction and indirect teaching or observation, whether they be of a legal, ethical, or academic nature. The teaching strategies which will be offered hold

much promise, from the writer's perspective, for achieving directly and indirectly the major values soon to be discussed.

Since the procedure of this chapter may be a helpful one to others who develop teaching materials for religion studies, it is summarized in the following statement:

Guideline 17. *In planning curriculum and instructional episodes in religion studies with regard to legal, ethical, and disciplinary issues, one may (a) first consider what general values are deemed desirable, (b) then consider what particular aims, content (of subject matter and processes), and teaching strategies may enable students and teachers in a particular place to achieve these values together in such a way that (c) local curriculum approaches, individual teaching styles, and each individual's worth, integrity, religious biography, and developmental characteristics are respected.*

The Values Envisioned

Given the issues and discussions of the preceding chapters, what are some of the dominant values implied in this approach to public school religion studies? In effect, the guideline which follows provides both the answer to this question and a rationale for religion studies in the schools.

Guideline 18. *The primary values here envisioned for religion studies are those which provide persons with a critical understanding and empathetic appreciation of religious pluralism in the United States; literacy concerning the nature and contributions of man's religions to world civilizations; and skills for creative, constructive, and discerning reflection upon religious phenomena.*

Arguments will now be advanced in support of these particular value selections. Suggestions for ways in which these values may be achieved will be found in the third major section of this chapter.

Critical Understanding and Empathetic Appreciation of Religious Pluralism

Religion studies in contemporary American public schools are to be designed to value religious pluralism. The founding fathers laid the basis and set the norm in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution: ". . . Congress shall make no law respecting an

establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . . ." In decision after decision the Supreme Court has noted with high regard the religious, ethnic, and racial diversity which characterizes the people of the United States. Several of these decisions have been cited with respect to religion and public education in Chapter I. In contrast to these court decisions and opinions, some "American Dream" seers envision a melting pot in which from many, one common people are molded. The dream of oneness has partially come true; the phenomenon called "American civil religion" is clearly in the focus of scholars, especially at this time in the nation's history.[1] However, this view of the American Dream tends to suppress the value of honest religio-cultural plurality of the many. The Supreme Court, perhaps seeing a kind of civil religion emerging, forbade *de facto* Protestant and even common-denominator religious practices in the schools and instead encouraged pluralistic religion studies. In its delivered opinions the Supreme Court consistently affirmed the place and importance of religions in the development of world civilizations, including contemporary society, and freedoms of religious belief, advocacy, and practice to which every person is entitled, limited only by the common health and welfare of society.

Moreover, the Court has argued that religion studies must be an integral part of the curriculum if the schools are to be serious about providing a complete education. But the purpose or primary effect of religion studies in the schools may not be to advance any particular religion or irreligion, not even secularism or an American civil religion. Thus the Supreme Court interpreted the Constitution as valuing religious pluralism in theory and practice for American society and hence for the schools. If students are to be fully equipped and responsible citizens in that society, they should become knowledgeable about the legal warrant for United States' religious pluralism and directly experience the value of pluralism in the classroom. A strategy for experiencing and achieving this value is given in the third major section of this chapter.

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[1] See, for example, Randolph C. Miller, ed., *Religious Education*, Vol. 70, No. 5 (September-October, 1975), devoted to the topic "Civil Religion and Education." Numerous professional conferences in 1975 and 1976 in which religion and education were related concerns had similar themes or keynote speeches.

In actually experiencing a pluralistic environment, persons may become better equipped for life in "the real world." Such an environment entails the kind of ethical concern which was discussed in Chapter I. This concern is also the basis for certain of the common goals of Michigan education in the area of "Student Learning."

> *Goal 7--Self-Worth*
> Michigan education must respond to each person's need to develop a positive self-image within the context of his own heritage and within the larger context of the total society. The development of a positive self-image will enhance the individual's ability to fruitfully determine, understand, and examine his own capacities, interests, and goals in terms of the needs of society.
>
> *Goal 8--Social Skills and Understanding*
> Michigan education must provide for each individual an understanding of the value systems, cultures, customs, and histories of his own heritage as well as of others. Each student must learn to value human differences, understand and act responsibly upon current social issues, participate in society and government while seeking to improve them, and seek a society where every person has equal access to the lawful goals he seeks regardless of his background or group membership. Each person must learn to develop and maintain effective interpersonal relationships.[1]

While these goal statements do not mention religion explicitly, it is obvious that the "value systems, cultures, customs, and histories" of one's own and others' heritages cannot be fully understood without some understanding of the role that the beliefs and religions of man play in the development of civilization. Religion is "one key to the understanding of a culture and the value orientation of individuals," according to the Michigan definition of the academic study of religion as an area of study.[2] For the ultimate concerns and total perspectives on life and transcendence--man's religions--are the roots and soil out of which are formed a plurality of value systems, cultures, and their subsequent histories. The fact that pluralism is valued in Michigan education can be seen clearly from the emphases on understanding and respecting the several heritages of man, valuing human differences, and seeking a society "where every person has equal access to the lawful

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[1] State (of Michigan) Board of Education, *The Common Goals of Michigan Education* (Lansing: Michigan Department of Education, 1971), p. 6.

[2] Michigan Department of Education, "Standards for Approval of the Academic Study of Religions for the Certification of Teachers" (Lansing, Michigan: 19 February 1970), p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

goals he seeks. . . ." Furthermore, if these are to be achieved, a requisite is an ethical environment. Therefore, the strategies in the third major section of this chapter include suggestions regarding the creation and maintenance of an ethically responsible environment in which the value of pluralism may be achieved through effective interpersonal relationships and constructive handling of individual religious differences.

Finally, the value of pluralism has been strongly commended to national educators by the American Association of School Administrators. The Association's Commission on Religion in the Public Schools entitled a section of their report, "Preparing for Citizenship in a Multifaithed Society," and a pluralistic emphasis pervades the whole report.[1] In its conclusion the Commission states that it "has recognized the unassailable fact that America is a pluralistic society."[2] Hence, religion studies as proposed herein highly values religious pluralism. Educational strategies are to be designed so that students and teachers are enabled to understand and appreciate the diversity of religious traditions, the range of beliefs of religions' adherents, and the variety of religious practices found in the world and freely exercized in this country as guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Literacy Concerning the Nature and Contribution of Religions

Literacy regarding the nature of religion and the influences of man's religions in culture is also a value in religion studies. That religions have indeed contributed to cultural heritages has been noted by jurists and academics, some of whom have been cited in the preceding chapters. An argument may be made that one cannot fully understand much of contemporary culture and most or all of pre-modern cultures, unless one has some grasp of their respective values, beliefs, and practices--their total perspectives on life. Indeed, to exclude religion studies from the public school curriculum is tantamount to undervaluing the role of religion in human civilization and thereby distorting history.

A curriculum which ignored religion would itself have serious

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[1] American Association of School Administrators, *Religion in the Public Schools* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), pp. 64-66.

[2] Ibid., p. 66.

> religious implications. It would seem to proclaim that religion has not been as real in men's lives as health or politics or economics. By omission it would appear to deny that religion has been and is important in man's history--a denial of the obvious. In day-by-day practice, the topic can not be avoided. As an integral part of man's culture, it must be included.[1]

Religion has been one of the means by which individuals and groups have structured and given priority to their values. That which ultimately concerns persons or the set of beliefs by which group values are formed may be called a "religion," whether or not the ultimate is a deity. Thus religion studies are closely related to value education and clarification.

Religion studies may also be closely related to the social sciences, arts, and humanities, as was shown in Chapter II. One of the common goals of Michigan education under the area of "Student Learning" is this:

> *Goal 6--Sciences, Arts, and Humanities*
> Michigan education must provide on a continuing basis, to each individual, opportunity and encouragement to gain knowledge and experience in the area of the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, and the creative and fine arts so that his personal values and approach to living may be enriched by these experiences.[2]

When studies of religions are naturally integrated into the curriculum, especially into courses in the arts, humanities, history, and social sciences, ample and varied opportunities are provided for students to examine the contributions of religions through various disciplines and subject matter and to be enriched therefrom. Analysis of religions in relation to their cultural contexts and concrete contributions assures a balanced and proportionate emphasis upon religions. At the same time, when religions and religious phenomena are studied by means of several disciplines, different conceptual frameworks and varying approaches can also enhance present and future creative, constructive, and critical thinking about religions. Students can therefore develop disciplined approaches to the nature and content of religions and their impact on man, his cultures, and his histories (including one's own history) through a variety of modes of inquiry. Thus, literacy concerning the

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[1] American Association of School Administrators, *Religion in Public Schools*, p. 56.

[2] State (of Michigan) Board of Education, *Common Goals*, p. 6.

nature of religions and their contributions to human civilizations and cultures, viewed from several perspectives, is a significant value in religion studies. Strategies to achieve religious literacy are also suggested in the third major section of this chapter.

Skills for Responsible Reflection Upon Religious Phenomena

Seemingly all of Michigan education should value preparation for responsible citizenship, according to these policy statements:

> Michigan education must help each individual acquire a positive attitude toward school and the learning process so that, as a result of his educational experience, he is able to achieve optimum personal growth, to progress in a worthwhile and rewarding manner in the career of his choice, and to render valuable service to society.
>
> *Goal 2--Preparation for a Changing Society*
> Michigan education must encourage and prepare the individual to become responsive to the needs created and opportunities afforded by an ever-changing social, economic, and political environment both here and throughout the world. An appreciation of the possibilities for continuing self-development, especially in light of increasing educational and leisure-time opportunities, will encourage him to pursue his chosen goals to the limits of his capabilities under such changing conditions.
>
> *Goal 4--Creative, Constructive, and Critical Thinking*
> Michigan education must foster the development of the skills of creative, constructive, and critical thinking to enable the individual to deal effectively with situations and problems which are new to his experience in ways which encourage him to think and act in an independent, self-fulfilling, and responsible manner.[1]

The question here is, what do religion studies have to do with achieving these goals?

It has been argued previously that a commitment to religious pluralism is a primary value of religion studies. American society is more or less pluralistic, depending upon geographical location. There appears to be a trend toward increased pluralistic exposure in most of the country. There are many causes for this trend, among them the development of technology (electronic media and vehicles), the effects of foreign policies and involvements, changing vocational and residential patterns, and the "shrinking" of the distances on earth into a sort of "global village." Society is changing; so are religious values, commitments, and mores. Some old traditions are

[1] State (of Michigan) Board of Education, *Common Goals*, pp. 5-6.

decaying and some new forms and phenomena are thriving or emerging. If persons are to be prepared for responsible citizenship in this changing society, they should be equipped to cope with the changing winds of values and religious phenomena as well. Persons should be able to discern change and deal with it as it happens in both their local community and world-wide society. How best to prepare persons for change through religion studies is largely the prerogative and responsibility of the local school district and its community to decide, in accordance with the precept of local autonomy.

There are, however, certain basic value ingredients which properly may be suggested to local school districts in Michigan. They are given in the Goal 4 statement cited on the previous page. Accordingly, religion studies which foster the development of contructive and critical skills can aid individuals to reflect responsibly upon religious ideologies and practices which are new to their personal experiences. Thus a high priority in religion studies is the development of skills for responsible reflection upon the phenomena and influences of man's religions. Given an ability to discern, examine, and weigh old and new religious perspectives, students and teachers may be better equipped, each according to individual ability and capacity, to act freely, ethically, and knowledgeably as responsible present and future citizens of a pluralistic society in its local, national, and global dimensions.

Assuming that values just articulated for religion studies are viable and desirable, how are these values to be realized? Procedural suggestions will now be submitted which bear in mind local autonomy, differing teaching styles, and the need for a range of strategies for consideration by educators in secondary schools.

Concern for Local Autonomy and a Plurality of Teaching Styles

Throughout this monograph, stress was upon the illustrative, suggestive, and provocative nature of the issues discussed and especially the guidelines proposed. There has also been an emphasis on local autonomy and a variety of approaches in religion studies. Since consistency among these emphases is desired, the emphases should be applicable also with respect to suggestions for strategies designed to realize envisioned values. No one approach, but rather suggestions

for a plurality of "models" for teaching (that is, patterns or protocols for planning educational environments and meaningful engagements between students, teacher, and subject matter) are seen as one way to maintain these emphases.

Educational research has thus far identified no single teaching pattern which has been demonstrated to be "best" or "right" in all circumstances. Local communities differ in composition, conditions, and curricular approaches. Students have differing cultural exposures, personal characteristics, and needs to be honored. Teachers possess certain competencies and teaching styles with which they are comfortable and which suit them and, hopefully, their students as well. Because of these variances, the content and strategies for teaching must not be construed as mandated or prescribed. There is no intention here to violate a teacher's integrity or style or a community's autonomy. The suggestions are rather an accommodation to a variety of teaching styles and community curriculum approaches. Thus a variety of strategies is viewed as a responsible way to encourage teachers to broaden their repertory of teaching techniques, to adapt the suggested strategies to their own styles, and thereby to grow professionally. Furthermore, the specific models chosen by the writer seemed to embody teaching strategies particularly appropriate to the issues and values previously discussed. Of course, appropriation of particular values, selection of subject matter, and adoption or adaptation of strategies suggested are the prerogative of the teacher working within the context of the predilections and priorities of a local community and school board and within the limits of the law of the land.

There is one particular resource, quoted rather extensively in the next section which the writer found to be singularly helpful in providing a synoptic view of a number of teaching models and strategies. In *Models of Teaching*, Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil argue for the use of many approaches to teaching and present a rather wide range of models, grouped by "families" of fundamental but differing perspectives on teaching.[1] The book is a kind of handbook of strategies for teaching, since the models and strategies examined are primarily those which other educators and social scientists have

[1](Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972).

developed. It seemed to be an ideal secondary source from which the writer could select those strategies which he deemed to be particularly appropriate to the issues, values, and content of religion studies proposed herein and to which educators interested in broadening their teaching repertories could be referred.

Since a major intent of this book is to stimulate future and present educators interested in religion studies to develop new insights, gain new competencies, and uncover fresh resources, the writer counsels persons who become interested in any of the strategies subsequently to be suggested to study the primary sources for more complete treatment and guidance. "Transfer" of the strategies from general education or other fields of inquiry to religion studies may then be completed by the teacher.

Guideline 19. *Teachers are encouraged to explore a variety of educational strategies in religion which may be used to realize educational values in ways that are legally appropriate, ethically responsible, academically sound, and pedagogically feasible.*

Some Ways to Realize the Values Envisioned

There are several feasible structural approaches which may be used to answer the "how" or procedural question. One could, for example, suggest one or more ways to achieve each of the envisioned values, letting the value determine the order of discussion. The writer has chosen instead to structure the approaches according to the order of topics presented in the preceding chapters. Thus three pedagogical means--inquiry into the legal place of religion studies in public school; creation and maintenance of a pluralistic, ethical environment for religion studies; and inquiry by means of several disciplines into religions and their phenomena--will be recommended for their appropriateness in realizing the major values selected. Some secondary but important values may also appear as the aims, content, teaching strategies, and potential effects of these three ways are explored.

Inquiry into the Legal Place of Religion Studies in Public Education

The *aims* of inquiring into the legal place of religion studies in public education are several. First, the legal warrant for religion

studies ought to be known to students and teachers alike, particularly if the class is the first one for students in this emerging area of the curriculum. An understanding of the legitimacy of the enterprise in which they will be engaged may increase receptivity and openness of students and teachers to the crucial issues. Secondly, this legal inquiry could also help ensure that teaching of religions in the classroom would be guided by the legal sanctions and constraints being studied, thus furthering a process whereby conscientious teachers and students together build a pluralistic environment which mirrors the intent of the law. In a pluralistic environment there should be freedom from indoctrination and from *de facto* establishment of any religion or irreligion and freedom for dialogue to take place in which similarities and differences in personal beliefs and meanings and the claims of many religions and irreligions are empathetically listened to and examined. The pluralistic classroom of the present may thus become a model for future behavior in a pluralistic society.

Knowledge and observation of legal limits can serve the student directly and indirectly. Academic instruction in the law can serve students by teaching directly how United States society is ordered and what the jurisprudential issues are, relative to the role religion may play in the schooling part of their society. Students can also be provided a demonstration and direct experience of how a lawful pluralistic environment can serve persons and protect their freedoms, in this case freedom of belief and advocacy, within the limits of the law. Thus indirect benefit can be gained by providing students with a microcosmic model of what a just pluralistic society can be like. Students and teacher can be stimulated to consider what their contribution in such a society might be in the future, and to act accordingly, given tolerance of alternative religious positions and preference for deliberation and dialogue over irrationality in developing social policy.

The *content* of legal inquiry relative to religion studies was suggested in large part by the section on "Legal Guidelines" in Chapter I. As was noted there, basic to the functioning of the United States is its Constitution. Our free society's behavior is molded by the Constitution; it is the law of the land. Responsible citizenship is informed by this normative guide and abides by it. Where particular circumstances may be interpreted as not lawful or not of the letter or

spirit of the Constitution, responsible citizens work to change the circumstances through due process. Therefore, fundamental to a discussion of the legal role of religion studies in the public schools are appropriate Amendments to and clauses in the Constitution relative to that particular issue.

But the Constitution is not always crystal clear. Interpretations and resultant practices differ. The United States Supreme Court acts as the final interpreter and arbiter of practices called into question legally. Therefore, curricular consideration of the legal issues ought to include some simplified case studies and Supreme Court decisions and opinions. Cases of concrete situations regarding the role of religion in the schools were cited in Chapter I. The primary documents containing the cases and written opinions may be found in any public library. Pieces of these cases may be found in an inexpensive booklet by the American Association of School Administrators, *Religion in the Schools*. The booklet was previously cited in this study and sections on the issue are very appropriate for study by teachers and students.

From the Constitution and Supreme Court interpretations, a class could proceed to a discussion of the value of pluralism in society and an extension of that value to religion studies in the public school classroom. The previously mentioned booklet has two interesting sections on pluralism and the schools. In addition, units on "Conformity or Diversity?" and "America: Protestant or Pluralist?" in *Religious Issues in American Culture* are particularly pertinent for senior high use.[1] Some concrete situations for study may also be found in the source to be mentioned next.

The *teaching strategy* particularly well suited to the values, aims, and content just described is Donald W. Oliver and James P. Shaver's "Jurisprudential Framework."[2] The framework and process of this strategy for dialogue about legal and ethical issues consists of

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[1]Robert A. Spivey, Edwin S. Gaustad, and Rodney F. Allen, *Religious Issues in American Culture* (Menlo Park: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1972).

[2]Found in Donald W. Oliver and James P. Shaver, *Teaching Public Issues in the High School* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966), pp. 126-130.

a set of eight intellectual operations, not all necessarily brought into play on any one issue, but pursued logically in roughly the order listed here:

1. Abstracting General Values from Concrete Situations.
2. Using General Value Concepts as Dimensional Constructs.
3. Identifying Conflicts between Value Constructs.
4. Identifying a Class of Value Conflict Situations.
5. Discovering or Creating Value Conflict Situations Which Are Analogous to the Problem Under Consideration.
6. Working Toward a General Qualified Position.
7. Testing the Factual Assumptions Behind a Qualified Value Position.
8. Testing the Relevance of Statements.[1]

The operations and descriptions of each are given by the authors in their book. This strategy, as well as others to be cited, is summarized by Joyce and Weil in their book *Models of Teaching*.[2] Both of these books may be consulted for fuller detail and direction concerning the use of this strategy.

Joyce and Weil provide a summary description of what they call the Jurisprudential Model, as shown in Table 1.

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[1] Oliver and Shaver, *Teaching Public Issues*, pp. 126-130.

[2] Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, pp. 52-53. A few words ought to be given in explanation of the descriptive terminology used by Joyce and Weil for each strategy submitted here. Figures and summary charts are also taken from this source. By "model for teaching" Joyce and Weil mean a pattern which has "identifiable focuses and a frame of reference of the environment which are most important in the life of the student (from the view of the model)" (p. 13). "Syntax" refers to the phasing or "shape of activities which typify the particular educational environment belonging to each model" (p. 14). "Principles of reaction" describe the selections of reactions the teacher (or other agent) makes as the interaction with students emerges (p. 15). The "social system" signifies the roles of students and teachers, the authority relationships of both, and the kinds of norms which are encouraged and rewarded. The degree of structure of roles, relationships, norms, and activities is described as "highly structured, moderately structured, or relatively unstructured" (p. 15). The "support system" indicates the additional requirements of role specifications, demands of the substantive material, or experiences beyond the usual competencies of the teacher and the classroom facilities (p. 16). Solid lines used in the figures to follow denote desirable instructional or direct effects; dashed lines denote nurtural or indirect effects.

TABLE I

JURISPRUDENTIAL TEACHING MODEL

Syntax:	Phase One	Phase Two
	Identification of public issue.	Dialogue in which the eight operations described by Oliver and Shaver are guides for teacher-moderated discussion.
Principles of Reaction:	Teacher (1) insures an intellectual climate where all views are respected; (2) preserves the intellectual solidity of the debate by continually pressing for the right operations.	
Social System:	Moderate to high structure with teacher initiating and controlling discussion. However, an atmosphere of openness and intellectual equality prevail.	
Support System:	Source documents which can be focused on as problem situations and other informational supports that elaborate the ethical and legal value positions which relate to a particular issue.	

SOURCE: Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil, *Models of Teaching* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 61.

An illustration of the "Jurisprudential Framework" applied to religion studies may be helpful. Suppose that a social studies class in a predominantly Protestant community is beginning to grapple with the question of the role religion may play in the public schools. The issue, we shall assume, was stimulated by a recent memorandum from the school board reminding all teachers that prescribed prayer and Bible readings are forbidden by the 1962 and 1963 Supreme Court rulings. The objective of the class is to work toward a qualified value position which will survive testing regarding the relative appropriateness of religion practices and studies in the schools.

The concrete situation could include the school board memorandum, the setting of either or both the *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) and *Schempp-Murray* (1963) Supreme Court cases, and the relevant part of

the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. The teacher would then endeavor to moderate class discussion generally according to the intellectual operations described above.

General values such as "there shall be no establishment of one religion or irreligion" and "freedom of religious expression is guaranteed" could be abstracted from the First Amendment. Potential conflicts could be identified by reference to the local school situation, the memorandum, and the settings of the legal cases. Conflict situations could then be classified. Analogous conflict situations--perhaps those arising out of community mores experienced by the students, for example, an all-school community Christmas program--could be reflected upon or created. The students then could be led to develop a general qualified position regarding the appropriateness of religious practices and religion studies in the public school and to test their position and assumptions over against the Supreme Court's decisions and opinions on these matters.

The significance of the Jurisprudential Framework strategy for achieving the given aims of legal inquiry and the values of commitment to pluralism and equipping for responsible citizenship in both school and broader society may be seen from the schematic of its potential effects in Figure 1.

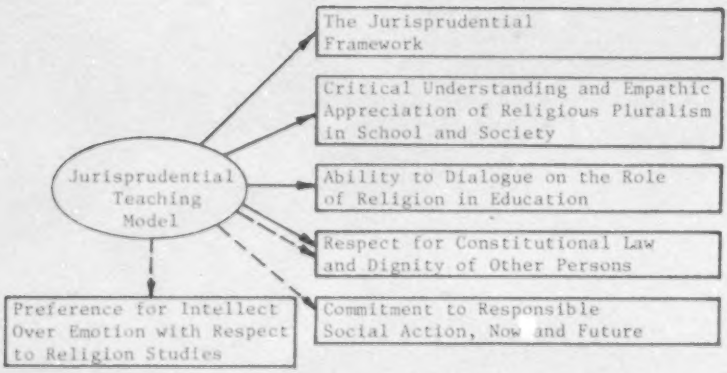
Jurisprudential Teaching Model
The Jurisprudential Framework
Critical Understanding and Empathic Appreciation of Religious Pluralism in School and Society
Ability to Dialogue on the Role of Religion in Education
Respect for Constitutional Law and Dignity of Other Persons
Commitment to Responsible Social Action, Now and Future
Preference for Intellect Over Emotion with Respect to Religion Studies

Figure 1--Potential Effects of the Jurisprudential Strategy[1]

[1]Adaptation of Figure 3-1 in Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, p. 61.

Thus one way to achieve the values envisioned in this book may be summarized by the following:

Guideline 20. *The Jurisprudential Framework strategy may be used to delve deeply into legal issues and content regarding the role and appropriateness of religion studies in public secondary schools. The strategy invokes a process whereby pluralism, classroom dialogue, rationality, and respect for one's own heritage, that of others, and the Constitution are valued both conceptually and functionally. Such inquiry can "set the stage" for ethically responsible and academically sound religion studies and prepare students for responsible critique of religio-legal issues in contemporary society.*

Creating and Maintaining a Pluralistic Ethical Environment

Discussion of this second way to achieve values envisioned in this study assumes and builds upon the issues and guidelines developed in the "Ethical Guidelines" section of Chapter I. An ethical environment as defined here is not one in which certain behaviors are recommended or discouraged and directly inculcated into students; rather it is one in which persons are promised opportunities for growth in understanding the world, self, and others and a quality of interpersonal relationships which secures and stabilizes the rights and responsibilities of all persons in the classroom.

The *aims* of creating and maintaining an ethical environment are primarily enabling and facilitating aims. Saying this is not, however, to denigrate their importance but rather to highlight their significance. Their content and the strategies are designed to prompt individual growth and self-esteem while facilitating ethical social interactions. Aims such as independence, self-direction, and esteem for one's religious tradition are coupled with group process and respect for pluralistic views and the right of each person to hold his or her position and belief system. An immediate concern is to develop tools for ethical discourse and cooperation between students and students and between students and teacher, thus producing a climate congenial to both personal development in understanding the contributions of plural religions and interpersonal interactions regarding multi-faceted religious beliefs and phenomena. This climate will be one in which differences in religious perspectives and practices, including those of persons in the classroom, are calmly and academically

described, analyzed, interpreted, and critiqued without fear of personal attack, put-down, or reprisal for personally-held beliefs. A long-range effect of such a climate may be more mature and empathetic persons who are better equipped to function responsibly, either independently or interpersonally, in a heterogeneous and pluralistic society, no matter how potentially explosive the societal issues.

The *content* proposed for use in building an ethical environment is taken from both material and process resources. Perhaps the students' introduction to the nature of an ethical educational setting could be by way of the first goal area of *The Common Goals of Michigan Education*.[1] In this area the focus in on "Citizenship and Morality" and the creation of a just educational environment. At the very least, the students and teacher together ought to consider how consciously working toward these goals may help establish an ethical educational environment in the classroom. At best, the shared goals may become freely adopted referents for analyzing classroom and societal interpersonal behavior in the present and future. Perhaps some flesh may be put on the bare bones of the Michigan goals by discussion of their implications for the particular classroom in religion studies. The section of Chapter I entitled, "Ethical Guidelines" may also be useful for class discussion, interpretation, critique and the possible basis for a classroom social covenant of sorts. Another resource, supplemental to *The Common Goals of Michigan Education* also referred to in the second section of Chapter I, is a handbook published by the State of California (see especially the first section entitled, "Moral Values and Public Education").[2] This resource is written primarily for school personnel in California, but the writer sees no reason why the substance could not be discussed among students and teachers in Michigan secondary schools.

If public education religion studies are to help equip persons to live Constitutionally guided and ethically responsible lives in contemporary society, and if ethical responsibility is "caught"

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[1] See Chapter I, p. 19. Free copies of the booklet are available upon request from the State of Michigan Department of Education.

[2] Moral Guideline Implementation Committee, *Handbook on the Legal Rights and Responsibilities of School Personnel and Students in the Areas of Moral and Civic Education and Teaching About Religion* (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1973), pp. 1-7.

indirectly as much or more so than "taught" directly, the classroom must model ethical interpersonal relationships. One way to model, among many ways perhaps, is to teach *and use* an inquiry process such as that suggested later on in this chapter. In such a process the teacher is a classroom catalytic agent by providing resource materials which are provocative and somewhat controversial and which give promise of eliciting alternative positions and subsequent debate. Much of the content suggested in the preceding legal inquiry section has served to elicit opposing positions in actual society and can be expected to serve similarly in classrooms. The teacher and students also stimulate the process with questions and hypotheses. If the teacher believes in the ethical value of mutually shared power-to-influence as described in Chapter I, the teacher's position--should it be asked for or offered--should be subjected to the same respectful consideration that the teacher is expected to give to all students' positions and that students are expected to afford to each other.

Finally, but perhaps most importantly, classroom incidents and social interactions, in which less-than-ethical behaviors (as defined here) are exhibited, may themselves be the focus of strategies designed to call attention to and correct these behaviors. One such strategy is the Glasser Classroom Meeting, described below.

The writer now submits two *teaching strategies* which seem particularly well suited to the values, aims, and content for an ethical environment. The strategies are called by Joyce and Weil the "Classroom Meeting Model" and the "Group Investigation Model."[1]

The Classroom Meeting Model includes a relatively simple strategy for developing an open, accepting, ethical environment in the classroom. It is based upon William Glasser's Reality Therapy which was presented in a popular form in his book, *Schools Without Failure*.[2] Philosophically, Glasser assumes an optimistic perspective on human nature and its capacity and motivation for enhancing self-respect and respect for others. The "Classroom Meeting" strategy aims toward the realization and maximization of individual growth and personal development. The climate for successful use of the strategy is

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[1] See Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, Chapters 13 and 7, respectively.

[2] William Glasser, *Schools Without Failure* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969).

established by relationships of warmth, openness, forgiveness, interest in persons, and sensitivity to beliefs and feelings on the part of both the teacher and the students to all others in the class. Development in individual responsibility, mutual respect, and responsiveness, Glasser contends, can be stimulated through the mechanism of periodic classroom meetings which focus on personal, interactional, or academic problems. The meetings are oriented in a positive direction toward resolving the problem presented. Incidents which threaten the maintenance of an ethical environment, that is, one in which religions and religious phenomenon are to be openly, respectfully, and empathetically studied, can provide "grist for the mill" of a classroom meeting.

Joyce and Weil give a succinct summary of the six elements suggested by Glasser's technique:

> The first and most fundamental would be the development of a warm, positive *involvement* within the classroom group, including the teacher. Second, the group must concern itself with *present behavior* rather than emotions, for the latter is the result of behavior. *"Emotion is the result of behavior*, but it is the behavior and the behavior alone that can be improved. When behavior is improved, it leads to good feelings that in turn will snowball toward better behavior."* Third, the child must make a *value judgment* on his own behavior, what he is doing now that contributes to his failure. For example, if the child misbehaves the teacher must ask "What are you doing?" and get the child to reply honestly. The teacher may then ask whether his behavior is helping him, her, the class, etc. In other words, the child's world should not be manipulated by the teacher so that he doesn't suffer the reasonable consequences of his behavior. Fourth, the child must *select a better course of action*. The teacher may suggest alternatives and assist the child in planning a better course of action. Glasser gives the example of the talkative, disruptive child. Together he and the teacher work out a better seating arrangement. Fifth, the child after identifying and selecting a better way, must make a *commitment* to enact it. Finally, once the value judgment, the selection, and the commitment to behavioral change is made, the teacher who cares exercises *discipline*, accepting no excuse for non-performance.[1]

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*Glasser, *Schools Without Failure*, pp. 20-21.

Assume for a moment that a problem occurs in a classroom in which one student is particularly disrespectful to the feelings and beliefs of another student who happens to belong to a minority religious sect. A summary description of the Classroom Meeting Model

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[1]Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, pp. 225-226.

applied to an incident such as this one would be as Table 2 shows.

TABLE 2

CLASSROOM MEETING MODEL

Syntax:	Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three
	Teacher establishes climate of involvement.	Teacher or student exposes problem for discussion.	Teacher gets student to make a personal value judgment.
	Phase Four	Phase Five	Phase Six
	Teacher and students identify alternative courses of action.	Student makes a behavioral commitment.	Teacher or group provide behavioral follow-up.
Principles of Reaction:	Teacher's behavior is governed by three principles: 1. principle of involvement. 2. teacher, but not the class, is non-judgmental. 3. together with the class, the teacher identifies, selects, and follows through with alternative courses of behavior.		
Social System:	Moderate Structure. Teacher controls much of the action but in certain phases she shares the initiation or closure of activity with the students.		
Support System:	Chief qualities of the classroom teacher: 1. warm personality. 2. skillful in interpersonal and discussion techniques.		

SOURCE: Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil, *Models of Teaching* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 232.

The "climate of involvement" could be established in many ways known by teachers who are open and accepting persons with some skills in interpersonal techniques. Perhaps an open environment could be stimulated by some of the goals for Michigan education cited above in combination with an ethical perspective such as that suggested in Chapter I. If the class can achieve consensus that an ethical environment--in which the power to influence is mutually shared, as is the responsibility to respect beliefs and heritages of all others--is

prerequisite for creative, constructive, and discerning study and reflection upon religions, then the climate is conducive to carrying out the remaining phases of the strategy.

Having established in some way the qualities and components of an environment, students or teacher can easily identify prejudicial attitudes, statements, or actions which violate the religious or irreligious sensibilities of others. Examples of such are anti-Semitism and anti-atheism, respectively. Without being judgmental, the teacher or a fellow student could call for a classroom meeting in which such disrespectful or prejudicial behaviors of a student can be dealt with directly. The student is asked to make a personal value judgment of his actions and feelings and whether they help or hinder the kind of environment desired for religion studies. If the offending student is amenable, teacher and fellow students could "brainstorm" and identify alternative ways of positively relating to students of minority religions or those of different commitments than the person's own. Given viable alternatives for constructive action in relating to the student offended, the offending student is asked to set a specific goal and make a commitment to a more ethical course of action. In turn, the student is aided in acting on this commitment by the teacher and peers in whatever ways are ethical and most helpful.

Use of this strategy consistently could help establish the ethical environment requisite for empathetic and responsible religion studies. However, a word of caution must be inserted here. The classroom meeting strategy could itself be conducted in an unethical and immoral manner if, in the process of the meeting, an offending student is either manipulated by the teacher or carelessly judged, verbally attacked, or personally disparaged by fellow students. The strategy offers potential benefits if all transactions between persons in the classroom are of a high ethical quality. A valued end does not justify inappropriate means.

The potential effects of this strategy are schematized in Figure 2.

It should be noted that the Classroom Meeting Model incorporates a primarily nurtural strategy concerned with the personal development of each student. Combined with the strategy immediately following, the classroom meeting technique seems to be singularly well suited to

bringing into focus and maintaining qualities requisite to an ethical environment in the religion studies classroom. This model and the one following can also be used appropriately in conjunction with the Jurisprudential Model, since the legal and ethical material and concerns are really of a complementary nature.

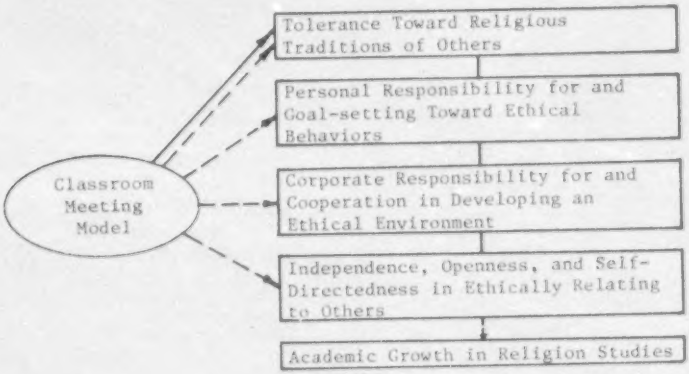
Classroom Meeting Model
Tolerance Toward Religious Traditions of Others
Personal Responsibility for and Goal-setting Toward Ethical Behaviors
Corporate Responsibility for and Cooperation in Developing an Ethical Environment
Independence, Openness, and Self-Directedness in Ethically Relating to Others
Academic Growth in Religion Studies

Figure 2--Potential Effects of the Classroom Meeting Strategy[1]

The Group Investigation Model, developed by Herbert Thelen, is more complex than the preceding model in that it attempts to combine in one teaching strategy democratic and ethical processes with a process of academic inquiry.[2] It assumes a constructionist view of knowledge, which is to assert that persons or homogeneous groups construct knowledge in the light of their personal or group experiences. For those who value an ideal pluralistic society, interpersonal interactions are desired to be democratic and ethical and functioning for the common good.

The Group Investigation Model focuses on melioration of societal intercourse through intellectualization of social concerns and issues and the practice of social processes. It has been argued that the public school classroom is a mini-image of larger society. In a pluralistic

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[1] Adaptation of Figure 13-1 in Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, p. 232.

[2] Herbert Thelen, *Education and the Human Quest* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960).

classroom, comprised of persons from several heritages with varying belief systems and cultic practices, ethical concern for the protection of individual freedoms and convictions and for the dignity, integrity, and autonomy of each person is important. However, group behaviors are also of ethical concern. This strategy is concerned with how class members function in a group investigation. Thus, not only religious phenomena are investigated and studied, but the manner in which the group process is carried on is also regarded as crucial. Thelen's model focuses on the negotiation of a classroom's social order. Again, a genuine problem or puzzlement arising out of the content being studied or a classroom conflict may be the point of departure.

Three processes are central to Thelen's strategy. These are the inquiry process initiated by teacher or students in which there is a puzzlement needing resolution; the diagnostic process in which groups of students formulate the problem and pursue alternatives and a resolution; and the group dynamics process in which both the results of study and social interactions are reflected upon by members in a class. The teacher's role is primarily that of counselor, consultant, and friendly critic. This role presumes a great deal of sensitivity and commitment to students as individual persons. A summary description of this model is found in Table 3.

TABLE 3

GROUP INVESTIGATION MODEL

Syntax:	Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three
	Encounter with a puzzling situation (planned or unplanned).	Exploration of reactions to the situation.	Formulate study task. Organize for study (problem definition, role, assignments, etc.).
	Phase Four	Phase Five	Phase Six
	Independent and group study	Analysis of progress and process.	Recycling of activity.
Principles of Reaction:	Teacher plays a facilitative role directed at group process (helps learners formulate plan, act, manage group) and requirements of inquiry (consciousness of method). Functions as an academic counselor.		

TABLE 3--*Continued*

Social System:	Democratic process, i.e., group decisions. Low external structure. Puzzlement must be genuine--it can't be imposed. Authentic exchanges are essential. Atmosphere of reason and negotiation.
Support System:	Environment must be able to respond to a variety of learner demands. Teacher and student must be able to assemble what they need when they need it.

SOURCE: Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil, *Models of Teaching* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 47.

Perhaps it would be helpful to illustrate this model with a puzzlement which might arise in a secondary class in religion studies. Suppose that it is early in a course on contemporary American religious groups. The instructor senses that many students are both aware of their differing religious traditions (assuming a pluralistic community) and somewhat apprehensive and self-conscious about having their particular religious group studied. Further suppose that the class agrees that a major problem is to develop a working definition of "religion" with which all can be comfortable. This then becomes an encounter with a puzzling situation which can be the task focus for both group process and individual reflection upon and sharing of respective religious viewpoints and perceptions. Ideas for defining the problem, roles, assignments, and so forth, can be negotiated and individuals in small groups encouraged to submit alternative definitions based upon their religious experiences, knowledge of their heritages, and any appropriate research. Analysis of and reflection upon progress and process of the small groups can reinforce the values of religious pluralism and the desirability of an ethical environment in which pluralistic religion study can be carried on. The use of this strategy in pursuit of this genuine problem could reasonably be expected to have the potential effects depicted in Figure 3 (shown on the following page).

A comparison of Figure 3 with Figures 2 and 1 shows that several values are shared by these models. Of particular interest here is how the strategies within these models especially value pluralism, ethical interpersonal relationships, and disciplined inquiry in religion studies. Consequently, the educator has some choice in the selection of strategies

in relation to the individual characteristics of class members.

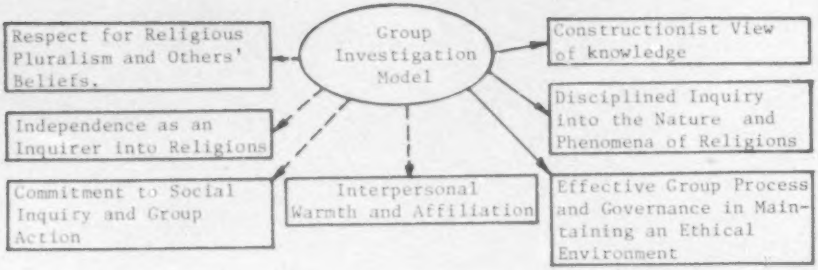
Respect for Religious Pluralism and Others' Beliefs.
Group Investigation Model
Constructionist View of knowledge
Disciplined Inquiry into the Nature and Phenomena of Religions
Independence as an Inquirer into Religions
Commitment to Social Inquiry and Group Action
Interpersonal Warmth and Affiliation
Effective Group Process and Governance in Maintaining an Ethical Environment

Figure 3--Potential Effects of the Group Investigation Strategy[1]

Both of the preceding strategies are included in one guideline statement as follows:

Guideline 21. *The Classroom Meeting and Group Investigation are two of several strategies which may be used to instruct in and nurture appreciation for religious pluralism; individual responsibility and responsiveness; and interpersonal respect and cooperation in religion studies classrooms where an ethical environment is of fundamental importance. These strategies may also be used to complement the Jurisprudential Framework.*

Multi-Disciplinary Inquiry in Religion Studies

A third way proposed to achieve the values envisioned in this study is through multi-disciplinary approaches to religion studies. This way assumes and builds upon the disciplinary issues, descriptions, questions, and guidelines presented in Chapter II--"Disciplinary Issues, Approaches, and Guidelines." In a sense, the legal and ethical dimensions are foundational for or prologue to actual religion studies. The multi-disciplinary inquiry in religion studies immerses teacher and students in viable alternative approaches designed to illuminate the facets of world religions. Thus both the disciplines and religion studies must be dealt with. We now turn to consideration of the aims, content, and strategies of multi-disciplinary inquiry into religion

[1]Adaptation of Figure 2-1 in Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, p. 46.

studies with respect to the values stated on the preceding pages.

The staff of the Florida State University Religion-Social Studies Curriculum Project has provided a convenient statement of some general goals for public education religion studies.[1] The goal statement, endorsed and widely distributed by the Public Education Religion Studies Center, includes as goals understanding and appreciation of the nature of religion and the place or role of religions in cultures. An understanding of a variety of ways of inquiry is also stressed. Pluralistic and literate religion studies should examine multi-faceted phenomena. If reductionism is to be avoided and justice to be done to the many facets and various perspectives on religion, several disciplinary approaches ought to be employed to illuminate the overall phenomenon. Thus one of the *aims* of multidisciplinary inquiry is to discover which approaches can yield the most adequate understanding and empathetic appreciation of religious pluralism and phenomena in the context of their role in affecting human cultural heritages.

A second aim is to provide conceptual "tools" for development of skills in creative, constructive, and critical thinking with respect to religions. Appropriate "tools" are the simplified conceptual frameworks and methodologies of several disciplines which may be applied to religions and their cultural contributions. Given familiarity and some dexterity with these tools, students may be better equipped to understand religious phenomena and to exercise responsible and critical (discerning) judgment concerning the religions in a changing pluralistic society. A concomitant aim would be to increase open-mindedness and objectivity toward "new" religious phenomena and groups that arise in the future, as well as an enhanced ability to inquire into these phenomena and groups, suspend immediate and uninformed judgments, and weigh alternative interpretations prior to arriving at an informed decision.

A third aim of this multi-disciplinary inquiry is the development of a creative capacity to appreciate and appropriate meaning from the unfamiliar products of religious communities, such as the visual arts, music, and literature. Human civilization has been immeasurably

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[1] In Peter Bracher, et al., *PERSC Outcomes* (Dayton, Ohio: Public Education Religion Studies Center, 1974), pp. 4 and 5.

enriched by the religious expressions of artists. Nurture of creative perception of these expressions can not only increase one's understanding and appreciation of the beliefs and commitments which gave rise to the artistic compositions but can also stimulate desire and potential to create something new and full of meaning as a means of self-expression of one's own religious beliefs and commitments.

When considering the *content* of multi-disciplinary inquiry into religion studies, the content of both the disciplines and religions being studied must be considered. In Chapter II an overview was given--though simplified, selected, and suggestive--of nine viable disciplinary approaches applied to religions. In that chapter, resources were cited rather copiously in the hope that readers might be stimulated to develop their interests and expertise in any or all of the methodologies of selected disciplines. It was probably noted that the emphasis in Chapter II was not so much on subject matter of religions as on idea and skill content regarding how the disciplinary approaches could be applied to religion studies.

Turning then to the subject matter of religions, one finds a multitudinous variety from which educators and students must make choices. Each religion is rooted in some geographical and historical particularity. Thus, spatial and environmental characteristics; anthropological studies and reports of cultural characteristics; archeological artifacts, discoveries, biographical sketches; events viewed through the perspectives in documents and accounts of eye-witnesses and interpreters--all of these may be studied and interpreted, using the conceptual frameworks and techniques appropriate to each of these data in order to construct histories of religions.

Religious ideology is expressed in dance and music, the visual arts, and literary documents of religious traditions. Beliefs and ultimate concerns may thus be studied, for example, through listening to "live" sacred music or recordings; through reflecting upon paintings in museums, visiting sculptures and worship edifices, or viewing pictures and slides of religious art history; through reading and interpreting the mythologies, sacred writings, creeds, theologies, moral codes, commentaries, and other literature of its leaders, adherents, agnostics, or critics.

The cultic practices of religions may be studied (to cite more examples) by means of dance and music, the visual products of

commitment, recorded liturgies, anthropological findings on ritual and rites of passage, psychological perspectives on religious experience, and the classifications of phenomenology of religion. Life-in-community, especially of contemporary societies as that life is expressed in social interactions, is the special concern of sociological analysis of religion. This illustrative list could be easily expanded. Students and teachers of religions should explore religions and their phenomena as broadly as the curriculum itself. As much time as necessary should be spent gathering the artifacts, primary sources, teaching aids, and materials which will make religion studies as interesting, informative, and provocative--or more so--as any other portions of the curriculum well received by students. The point is that there is a broad continuum of subject matter and curriculum material possibilities for disciplined study of the vast variety of religious phenomena available to teachers and secondary school students.[1] The scope of curricular content in religions is limited, perhaps, only by the major values selected by the educators and by the ingenuity, interest, and curiosity of students and teachers in any given school.

The content of processes in multi-disciplinary religion studies must also be mentioned. Religious phenomena, like many other culturally conditioned phenomena, should be examined and appropriated hermeneutically. That is to say, something beyond mere description and factual uncovering is necessary if students and teacher are to understand the genius and expressions of religions. The process of understanding necessitates interpretation, the science of which is called hermeneutics. If students and teacher wish to "know" religious phenomena, they should be initiated into accepted methodologies of different conceptual frameworks which can be used to interpret the phenomena. Such frameworks include such disciplines as the history and criticism of the fine arts, the anthropological approach, the sociology of religion, the psychology of religion, and the history (including geography) and phenomenology of religions--in other words, those disciplines selected in Chapter II.

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[1] The Public Education Religion Studies Center, previously mentioned, publishes a free-of-charge *Newsletter* which continually reviews new curricular materials and provides information about publisher and cost. Interested persons may be added to the mailing list by writing PERSC, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio, 45431.

Furthermore, the hermeneutical method is critical, that is, discerning with respect to the text or object being studied, the tools used to study it, and the presuppositions and perspective both of the originator and the interpreter. A critical awareness of this sort is a necessary component of the academic study of religions, to which secondary school students should be invited and introduced carefully and fairly.

Support for these contentions may be gleaned from the definition of religion studies approved by the State of Michigan Board of Education. In the introduction to the "Standards. . ." this definition was provided:

> Religion as an academic discipline describes, interprets, and compares sacred writings, creeds, theologies, mythologies, and cultic practices of a culture or cultures.[1]

Though the Standards were written for college and university teacher education, the writer finds no reason why the definition ought not be extended to the academic study of religions in secondary school since the discipline remains basically the same at any level.

The content of processes in religion studies, then, is that which is included in description, interpretation, and comparison. In the hermeneutical framework, carefully executed comparison is coupled with critique so that objective presentations and discerning analysis of the evidence of religions may be characterized by the following: (a) Facts and evidence should be scrupulously gathered. Wherever possible, primary sources should be used, especially in the literature and history of religions. Evidence for beliefs should be presented honestly and justly. (b) Beliefs and practices should be accurately described. An empathetic and imaginative attempt should be made to get as close to the adherents' convictions as one is able. This requires and develops valued skills in imaginative, creative, and constructive thinking. (c) Alternative interpretations of facts or beliefs ought to be acknowledged and presented for discussion. How alternative systems of beliefs and practices reflect different meanings may then be sensitively explored. (d) Similar or corresponding phenomena of religions may be compared and contrasted in order to increase

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[1]Michigan Department of Education, "Standards for Approval," p. 1.

understanding of varying perspectives. However, comparisons for the purposes of recommending one religion over another or demonstrating superiority of one religion over another transgress the boundaries of objective teaching. (e) Critical assessments of religious phenomena and interpretations by scholars or students stemming from alternative religious views or from other methodological perspectives can play an important role in the development of critical thinking and in one's ability to clarify beliefs and values in a systematic and rational way.[1]

Before proceeding to consideration of more strategies, perhaps this emphasis on the processes involved in comprehensive religion studies deserves highlighting in a guideline statement which is as follows:

Guideline 22. *The academic study of religions includes, but is not limited to, careful description of religions, their phenomena, and their contributions to cultures. Analysis, interpretation, comparison, and critique--properly understood and handled--are also processes integral to an adequate study of the genius or "mind" and content of man's religions. Varied and equally viable techniques for such study are suggested by the disciplinary approaches and Guidelines 7-16.*

Of the many possible *teaching strategies* for multi-disciplinary probing of religions and their phenomena, three appealed particularly to the writer. The three strategies are called by Joyce and Weil the "Advance Organizer Model," the "Synectics Model," and the "Social Inquiry Model."[2] These were chosen for several reasons, the first of which is their evident diversity and applicability to a wide range of student and teacher abilities. (After all, though interstate highways make for efficient traveling and covering "a lot of ground" in minimum time, most travelers yearn for a change of scenery and pace to provide spice and joy on a trip. In general, students and teachers likewise desire and benefit from variety.)

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[1]This last characteristic is perhaps the most controversial and difficult to manage. However, at least two college level textbooks make a good case for considering the critics. See John B. Magee, *Religion and Modern Man* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 12, and Frederick J. Streng, Charles L. Lloyd, Jr., and Jay T. Allen, *Ways of Being Religious* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc.), pp. 19-20.

[2]Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, Chapters 10, 14, and 4, respectively.

The Advance Organizer Model was selected because of its potentially efficient and informative strategy for introducing students to unfamiliar representative ideas, concepts, and questions typically asked by several disciplines when applied to religious phenomena. An introduction to several disciplines can provide persons with more tools for creative, constructive, and critical inquiry. Moreover, the high degree of structure of the Advance Organizer strategy can serve to set an academically sound and responsible course, especially helpful to those students who feel the need for substantial structure in order to begin their investigations. The Synectics Model was selected because of its dual emphases on teaching and nurturing creativity in exploring unfamiliar phenomena and in making something new. The power of these strategies will be felt particularly when the disciplines of visual arts, music, literature, and phenomenology of religions are being utilized to examine the artistic products of religious mythology and ideologies. The Social Inquiry Model is one of several models which make use of inquiry techniques in disciplinary studies. It gives promise of equipping students with a technique for inquiring discerningly and constructively into the many kinds of religious heritages and their differing cultural expressions in ideology, cult, and codes of moral conduct.

The three models selected also contribute to a dimensional balance deemed desirable by the writer. As the three models selected for the legal and ethical foci reflected concern for balance between individual, interpersonal, and academic dimensions, so too the Synetctic, Social Inquiry, and Advance Organizer models reflect a balance between these tripartite dimensions, albeit a desirable tendancy to tip in favor of the ethical concerns for individual personal growth and for just, respectful, and sensitive interpersonal classroom activities.

Moreover, it is argued that a repertory of strategies which includes those suggested by the three models soon to be considered (or some similar strategies) is well-suited toward realization of the values cited in the preceding section of this chapter, particularly the values of literacy concerning the contributions of religion to the cultural heritages and equipping persons for creative, constructive, and critical thinking as part of responsible citizenship. How these strategies do so will be discussed next.

The Advance Organizer Model was developed by educational psychologist David P. Ausubel.[1] His major concern was to devise an efficient way of processing information about the conceptual frameworks and methodologies of several disciplines. His conviction, not unlike Jerome Bruner's, was that the structural ideas of each discipline can be described and taught to students in such a way that these ideas and concepts can become a meaningful information processing system for them. Obviously, this conviction is shared by the writer, considering the way the disciplines were presented in Chapter II.

Of central importance in the model is the focus on "advance organizers," described by Ausubel in this manner:

> Advance organizers consist of introductory material at a higher level of abstraction, generality, and inclusiveness than the learning task itself. The function of the organizer is to provide ideational scaffolding for the stable incorporation and retention of the more detailed and differentiated material that follows the learning passage, as well as increase discriminability between the latter and related inferring concepts in the cognitive structure.[2]

Applying the "advance organizer" idea to multi-disciplinary inquiry into religion studies is not difficult. The writer believes that the disciplinary guideline statements in Chapter II--as they are or revised by the teacher--may function as "advance organizers." As they appear, of course, these guideline statements follow the description of each discipline and some representative questions which it asks. However, when using this strategy, the disciplinary guideline statements may be the verbal material *first* taught. Thus the students are presented first with these rather abstract, general, and inclusive guideline statements which attempt to incorporate the perspective of several disciplines deemed appropriate for studying religion.

After each disciplinary guideline statement is provided, explained, and perceived, "progressive differentiation" can be made using material adopted or adapted from Chapter II on the description of the discipline and some appropriate general and particular questions which that discipline asks of religious phenomena. Other more particular expository organizers may also be used. Techniques for presentation

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[1] David P. Ausubel, *The Psychology of Meaningful Verbal Learning* (New York: Frune & Stratton, 1965).

[2] Ibid., p. 29.

are left to the good judgment of the teacher. Presentations can be lecture, exposition of duplicated copies of the written material in Chapter II, a simplified synopsis of that material, a leading question, a demonstration, a filmic episode, or whatever is deemed most appropriate. As recommended here, the advance organizers are intended to provide, succinctly and directly, information about the discipline and its particular methodology as applied to religion studies. The strategy is to proceed from the abstract and general to the concrete and particular--from the apex of a cone to its broadest part, pictorially speaking. It is important to note that this strategy may be coupled with either or both of the strategies in the following models in order to balance highly structured introductions to the disciplines with less structured strategies and to provide students with opportunities to "check-out" and actively use the information processed in exploring religions and religious phenomena.

A summary description of this model has been provided by Joyce and Weil as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4

ADVANCE ORGANIZER MODEL

Syntax:	Phase One	Phase Two
	Presentation of organizer.	Presentation of verbal material to be learned.
Principles of Reaction:	Teacher is seen as presenter. No consistent principles characterize the model.	
Social System:	High Structure. Teacher defines roles and controls norms. Learner roles carefully defined.	
Support System:	Development of organizer and system for presenting it is crucial. Material, however, must be organized so it pertains to the organizer.	

SOURCE: Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil, *Models of Teaching* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. 178.

It may be helpful again to provide an illustration of the Advance Organizer model. Let us assume that a class elects to study some facets of religions through their visual arts. The "advance organizer"

for visual arts of religions could be adopted as stated in Guideline 8, Chapter II, page 33, (or revised by the teacher) and be projected overhead or typed on a handout:

> *An approach to religion studies via the visual creations of religions is designed to acquaint persons with the depictions of beliefs and ultimate commitments of a particular people. It encourages appreciative and empathetic viewing of the ways artists used materials in individual compositions. It further entails imaginative reflection upon the emotions, ideas, and religious commitments expressed in and through the visual depictions of a particular time and place.*

Perhaps this statement could be illustrated with a few slides or pictures in which some general examples of the visual arts of religions are depicted--for example, a statue of Buddha, a Hindu temple, a work of early Christian iconography, etc. Questions may be elicited or asked regarding the terms used in the advance organizer so that each student has some understanding of the function of visual arts applied to religion studies.

Progressive differentiation of the three sentences in the organizer can then be made, perhaps using the first paragraph of the description of the discipline given above in Chapter II, pages 30-31. A variety of visual depictions of a religion being studied could be shown. Students could do some guessing about the beliefs and ultimate commitments of the artist. Individuals or small groups might form some tentative hypotheses regarding the religion (as the inquiry strategy, discussed later, requires[1]). Then one or more depictions could be analyzed more closely according to the questions of technical design suggested on page 32 or other more suitable questions. These questions are leads to expository organizers used to illustrate the second sentence of Guideline 8. The next step, that of imaginative reflection suggested in the third sentence, could then be initiated by means of the remaining part of the description of the discipline given on page 31 and the "questions of interpretation and meaning," page 32 or other pertinent questions prepared by the teacher. Here also a Synectics strategy, described immediately following this strategy, could be used to stimulate creativity in reflecting upon something quite unfamiliar. Or the students could continue the inquiry strategy by clarifying, exploring, and providing evidence for hypotheses developed concerning

[1] See pages 102 and following.

the art works in relation to the beliefs of the religion being studied.

The point is that a strategy which makes use of advance organizers can provide the students with fundamental, though admittedly selected, information about a number of disciplines and their methodologies with respect to religious data. It claims to be an efficient and time-saving process which allows students to proceed with their main task of academically sound inquiry into the data and phenomena of religions. The potential effects of using this model are schematized in Figure 4.

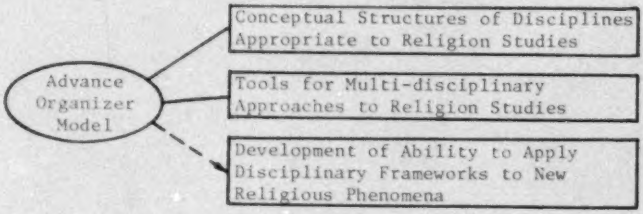
Advance Organizer Model
Conceptual Structures of Disciplines Appropriate to Religion Studies
Tools for Multi-disciplinary Approaches to Religion Studies
Development of Ability to Apply Disciplinary Frameworks to New Religious Phenomena

Figure 4--Potential Effects of the Advance Organizer Model[1]

An ability of students to apply some of the conceptual tools provided in classroom religion studies to future disciplinary assessment of new religious phenomena as they appear in a changing society is a potential long-range effect of the disciplinary approach to education in religion studies.

When considering the focus, structure, and potential of this model, one must remember that its use in the context of this study is for a specific purpose. The purpose is to introduce secondary students (and perhaps some teachers) to somewhat elementary and simplified versions of the conceptual frameworks and methodologies of several disciplines which then may be applied in academically sound inquiry into religions and religious phenomena. The sights must be trained on the religion target and not be shifted to concentration solely on the disciplines. The academic study of religions must be just that--the disciplines are intended here to serve as vehicles toward realizing the values of

[1]Adaptation of Figure 10-1 in Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, p. 178.

studying religions as stated in the first section of this chapter. Moreover, if students come to a class in religion studies with generally low conceptual understandings of alternative disciplinary frameworks and their modes of operation, a high degree of structure such as characterizes this model may be most suitable to matching content and strategy with these students' conceptual characteristics.

The Synectics Model, an approach designed and adapted to education by William J. J. Gordon,[1] has fascinating implications for religion studies. The model would be especially appropriate for an inquiry into religions by way of the first three and last of the disciplines presented in Chapter II--the visual arts, music, literature, and some aspects of phenomenology of religion. In these disciplines both the role of imagination and creative perception are crucial if one is to appreciate and empathetically understand the artistic and essential manisfestations of ultimate concerns and beliefs.

The Synectics Model begins with the assumption that imagination and creativity may be taught directly and indirectly. Another assumption is that processes for stimulating group and individual creativity are fundamentally the same.[2] The basic technique employed for developing creativity is metaphoric activity. Three metaphoric forms--personal analogy, direct analogy, and compressed conflict (a two-word description of an object using opposites or contradictions)--are utilized in that which Joyce and Weil call "Exploring the Unfamiliar" and "Creating Something New."[3] The metaphorical tool is designed to free the students for enhanced and enlivened insight into unfamiliar as well as every day phenomena. When applied to religious phenomena, particularly the arts, it can be a valuable tool for teachers and students to use in the academic study of religions.

Some idea of the techniques and structures used in the Synectics Model may be gleaned from Table 5. Those who wish to study the model in depth and gain proficiency in its use are referred to the books by Gordon mentioned earlier.

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[1] William J. J. Gordon, *Synectics* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961); and *The Metaphorical Way of Learning and Knowing* (Cambridge: Synectics Education Press, 1970).

[2] Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, p. 234.

[3] Ibid., pp. 237-248.

TABLE 5

SYNECTICS MODEL

Syntax: Strategy One: Exploring the Unfamiliar

Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three
Substantive Input. Teacher provides information on new topic.	Direct Analogy. Teacher suggests direct analogy and asks students to describe the analogy.	Personal Analogy. Teacher gets students to "be the direct analogy."
Phase Four	**Phase Five**	**Phase Six**
Comparing the Analogies. Student identifies and explains the points of similarity between new material and the direct analogy.	Explaining the Differences. Student explains where the analogy doesn't fit.	Exploration. Students re-explore the original topic on its own terms.
Phase Seven		
Generating Analogy. Students can provide their own direct analogy and explore the similarities and differences.		

Strategy Two: Creating Something New

Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three
Description of Present Condition. Teacher gets students' description of situation as they now see it.	Problem Statement and Task Definition. Teacher states problem and defines task.	Direct Analogy. Students suggest direct analogies, select one, and explore (describe) it further.
Phase Four	**Phase Five**	**Phase Six**
Personal Analogy. Students "be the analogy" they selected in Phase Three.	Compressed Conflict. Students take their description from Phases Three and Four and make a compressed conflict.	Direct Analogy. Students generate and select another direct analogy based on the compressed conflict.

TABLE 5--*Continued*

	Phase Seven Reconsider Original Task. Teacher gets students to move back to original task or problem utilizing last analogy and/or entire synectics experience.
Principles of Reaction:	The teacher acts as exemplar in using the non-rational, fantasy, symbolism, play-of-fancy, etc., and must be accepting of the bizarre and unusual and, in fact, of all genuine student responses.
Social System:	Moderately structured with the teacher initiating the sequence and guiding the use of operational mechanisms, after spending some time in "stretching exercises"--activities to get the students to loosen up and be comfortable with the use of metaphors. Students, however, have a great deal of freedom in using the techniques mentioned above. Cooperation, play-of fancy, and equality are essential.
Support System:	A teacher competent in Synetics procedures and an environment in which creativity is prized and utilized.

SOURCE: Adapted from Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil, *Models of Teaching* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), pp. 248-252.

The observation was made previously that the Synetics strategies would be particularly useful with disciplinary inquiry into the arts of religions and perhaps phenomenology of religions. For example, appreciating and exploring the unfamiliar in a painting, a sculpture, a Hindu chant, the Islamic muezzin's call to prayer, an African dance and music may be enhanced by Synectics procedures. Take, for instance, the muezzin's prayer call to the faithful. The substantive information could be a recording of the call and a translation of the words of the prayer played for students. Direct analogies could then be suggested by the students and teacher, the most fitting comparison chosen, and the connections between the call to prayer and the analogy described in some detail both as to fit and non-fit. If the analogue does not generally fit, a new one should be chosen, though no analogue should be expected to fit completely.

A second metaphoric activity recommended by Gordon is that of personal analogy. The students are asked to *be* the direct analogy, that is, to make an empathetic identification and involvement with an emotion, a living person or thing, or a non-living object--in our case the muezzin calling the Islamic adherents to prayer. The question could be, "How would I feel if I were the Islamic muezzin calling to prayer?" Joyce and Weil suggest that making personal analogies *before* drawing intellectual comparisons could increase richness of thinking for the latter.[1]

A third metaphorical form, compressed conflict, could be developed from the traits used in the personal or direct analogies or in the "Creating Something New" strategy described in Table 5. The intent would be to incorporate two opposing or contradictory frames of reference with respect to a single object. A few examples from Gordon are "life-saving destroyer," "nourishing flame," and "safe attack."[2]

After doing these metaphorical activities, the students and teacher can explore the muezzin's call on its own terms and its relation to the central tenets of Islamic beliefs and practices and then provide additional direct analogies in the light of this analysis.

Joyce and Weil schematize the potential effects of this model as shown in Figure 5 on the following page. Note that concern for subject matter is an integral part of the Synetics Model. Development of creative capacities may be a value in itself as well as a means toward achieving the value of enhanced literacy in the nature and phenomena of religions.

The Synectics strategies are valuable for their "fun" potential as well as their promise for developing a climate of cooperation and acceptance. Equally or more valuable is their potential for developing skills in imaginative and creative thinking. This skill is a prerequisite for appreciatively entering into and understanding strange or unfamiliar religious contributions to cultural heritages. Skill in creative thinking is also valued as one of the important dimensions in equipping persons for full, responsible participation in a changing

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[1] Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, p. 239.

[2] See Gordon, *The Metaphorical Way*, for a much more thorough explanation and for many examples.

society--in a society which constantly is threatened by pressures of conformity and functionalism.

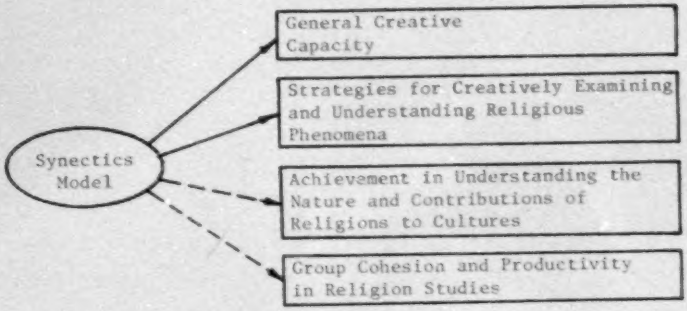
Synectics Model
General Creative Capacity
Strategies for Creatively Examining and Understanding Religious Phenomena
Achievement in Understanding the Nature and Contributions of Religions to Cultures
Group Cohesion and Productivity in Religion Studies

Figure 5--Potential Effects of the Synectics Strategies[1]

The Social (Religious) Inquiry Model, the last to be submitted in this study, rather than being least important and certainly not the last of possible models, includes what is probably the most widespread strategy now being used in religion studies. This strategy is generally described as the "inquiry method." In *Models of Teaching*, Joyce and Weil suggest several models which utilize an inquiry process.[2] They also point out that different makers of models give diverse meanings to the word "inquiry." A brief survey of some published curriculum material on religion studies shows the diversity with which the inquiry concept is viewed.

A simple description of inquiry is given in the Instructor's Guide for a unit on *Religion in the United States*.

> There are, then, two dimensions of inquiry included here: One involves the gathering and analyzing of data; adequate instructions are given in this guide for handling these activities. The other involved skillful questioning that enables students to reach conclusions through their own hypothesizing and investigating.[3]

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[1] Adaptation of Figure 14-1 in Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, p. 251.

[2] Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*. See, for example, Chapters 8 and 9 concerning the Inquiry Training Model and the Biological Science Inquiry Model, respectively.

[3] Sociological Resources for the Social Studies (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971), p. 7.

A bit more complex description is that found in the Teacher's Guides for the "Issues in Religion" series:

> Students are asked to analyze source materials related to issues in religion and the social studies. On the basis of the information provided, students are asked to develop their own positions. Then an open, informed class discussion permits students to present their own findings, offer and defend their own points of view, and--above all--consider respectfully alternative positions than the one which they (or even the class as a whole) have reached.[1]

The model used in the Asian Studies Inquiry Program is more specific, though not intended to be restrictive, by suggesting that the students should be taught to proceed through six stages:

1. The student should *orient* himself to the materials by gathering general information.
2. He should *define*, determine, or bring into focus any problem, issue, or event to be considered.
3. He should *analyze* the pertinent information.
4. He should *hypothesize* or generate a tentative explanation, solution, or conclusion.
5. He should *acquire* as much *evidence* as is necessary to validate, reject, or modify the hypothesis or tentative "answer."
6. He should *synthesize* the findings, information, and insights into warranted conclusions or generalizations.[2]

The several phases of problem-solving are stated in a slightly different order and in greater detail in the Teacher's Manual for episodes in secondary curricular material entitled *Religious-Philosophical Systems*, written by Massialas and Zevin.[3] This material follows from the Social Inquiry Model, developed by Massialas and Benjamin Cox, which is described in Joyce and Weil.[4] Because it is a more direct application to religion studies, the Massialas and Zevin strategy will be discussed in further detail later. But first some observations about the diverse descriptions of the inquiry process should be made.

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[1] Robert A. Spivey, Edwin S. Gaustad, and Rodney F. Allen, *Religious Issues in American Culture* and *Religious Issues in Western Civilization* (Menlo Park: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1972 and 1973 respectively).

[2] John V. Michaelis and Robin J. McKeown, Coordinators, *Asian Thought*, Asian Studies Inquiry Program (San Francisco: Field Educational Publications, Inc., 1969), Teacher's Manual, p. 9.

[3] Byron G. Massialas and Jack Zevin, *Religious-Philosophical Systems*, "World History Through Inquiry" Series (Chicago: Rand McNally, & Co., 1969).

[4] Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, pp. 62-74.

Though descriptions provided above differ, there appears to be uniformity of emphasis on two key points. The first has to do with the value of *active* engagement by students in disciplined exploration of issues and problems in religions. Knowledge gained from evidence is viewed as tentative or open-ended, subject to defense before and revision by fellow students, and alternative positions are to be respectfully heard and considered in an open and ethically sensitive environment. Perhaps the greatest claim for the inquiry process is that its mastery enables students to make "cross-applications" of the process to new and unfamiliar issues and problems; it claims to provide knowledge to generate knowledge.[1] Applied to the study of religions and values, "cross-application" potentially enables students to address new and controversial issues openly, rationally, and critically before they form viable generalizations and judgments. Therefore, the inquiry strategy could be a major contributing factor in realizing the values envisioned in the first section of the chapter.

The second point of emphasis has to do with the teacher of religion studies. It has been argued above that the teacher is called to "objectivity"--to delimit or transcend her or his subjective, personal convictions and religious commitment. The paths which enable one to the kind of objective presentation mentioned by the Supreme Court, it has been contended, are the approaches and procedures of the disciplines. Each discipline asks its own questions of religious phenomena; it inquires into religion in its own academic way. When using the inquiry process, the teacher acts as a coach and guide for students. Students are coached on *how* to ask *what* questions *when* before assertions and/or generalizations are made, defended, revised, and perhaps appropriated. In an environment which values open and disciplined inquiry, teacher and students are enabled to exercise their mutual responsibility for legal observance, ethical sensitivity toward the freedom of conscience and conviction of all, and sound scholarship in academically diverse study of religions.

What, then, does the Social Inquiry Model applied to the study of religions entail? In this model the foci are on both content and

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[1] J. Cecil Parker and Louis J. Rubin, *Process as Content* (Chicago: Rand McNally, & Co., 1969), pp. 12 and 48.

process. In their resource materials students are told:

> In *Religious-Philosophical Systems* you will be asked not only to examine various religions and philosophical ideas but also to observe the impact they have had on daily life by analyzing such evidence as religious ceremonies, art, and political documents.[1]

The process of analysis just mentioned is detailed in the Teacher's Manual which accompanies this unit of study.

> Learning through inquiry is the process of exploring and testing ideas. In world history the ideas relate mainly to man's past and present interactions with both his fellowmen and his environment. In WORLD HISTORY THROUGH INQUIRY the authors are concerned with ways of encouraging students to identify and develop valid concepts and generalizations about man's social behavior. As students formulate these concepts and ideas, they will become familiar with basic research skills in the social sciences and with general skills of problem-solving.
>
> The goal of WORLD HISTORY THROUGH INQUIRY is to teach students *to think systematically* and *to generalize* from given data. Since our society and others throughout the world are constantly faced with serious social problems which involve the clash of interests, students need to acquire skill in dealing with such conflicts. WORLD HISTORY THROUGH INQUIRY provides the basis for developing this skill.[2]

Three essential characteristics of this inquiry process are an open climate for discussion (perhaps engendered by strategies such as those suggested above), an emphasis on hypotheses formulated by the students, and a consideration of the validity and reliability of the use of facts as evidence.

This inquiry process begins with presentation of data, perhaps the use of a selected passage in a sacred text or other historical document, art or architectural forms, religious ceremonies, or other religious phenomena, in order to confront students with a genuine problem or puzzlement. The succeeding steps are described below:

1. *Orientation*. During this phase the student is faced with a problem which he tries to analyze and solve. (In WORLD HISTORY THROUGH INQUIRY the problems are introduced by "discovery episodes.")
2. *Hypothesis formation*. For our purposes, a hypothesis is a statement that attempts to explain a problem encountered at the orientation phase. Usually it is stated as a relationship between events or human actions. For example, the simple idea that a revolution takes place when people become extremely

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[1] Massialas and Zevin, *Religious-Philosophical Systems*, p. 1 of student booklet.

[2] Ibid., Teacher's Manual, p. 1.

dissatisfied with their government may serve the function of a hypothesis and may channel the investigation in a given direction.

3. *Definition.* Here the student is expected to clarify his hypothesis, indicating its precise meaning. He may use dictionary definitions of words, or he may develop their meanings from his data. But definition does not necessarily follow the forming of a hypothesis. It may take place at any phase of problem-solving.
4. *Exploration.* During this phase, implications of the original hypothesis are noted and investigated. For example, if revolutions are brought about by people who are extremely dissatisfied with their government, then all past relolutionary movements must have been initiated by such people.
5. *Evidencing.* This is the process of collecting additional information and using it to test the original hypothesis. If the hypothesis can be supported by this evidence, it may be accepted; if not, it is rejected or futher qualified.
6. *Generalizations.* If the hypothesis passes the test of evidence, it may become a generalization. A generalization is a statement of relationship applicable to all similar cases at all times and places. However, a generalization should always be subject to revision, no matter how many tests of validity have been applied to it. Generalizations are open-ended and may have to be reformulated as new material is introduced.[1]

In terms of the language and constructs used in this chapter, a summary of the Social Inquiry Model provided by Joyce and Weil is found in Table 6. The inquiry strategy described may be applied to most aspects of religion studies, particularly those involving the social science disciplines. Hypotheses may be developed, for example, regarding literary sources, geographical and cultural influences, sociological patterns, psychological causes, and phenomenological comparisons. The descriptions, representative questions, and guideline statments of the disciplines in Chapter II may be of aid in defining, clarifying, exploring, and evidencing hypotheses prior to stating a tentative generalization.

An illustration of this inquiry strategy applied to a sociological-anthropological analysis of marriage ceremonies is taken from Exercise 2 of the Massialas and Zevin curriculum resource materials.[2] The class is provided with documents and a few photographs describing marriage ceremonies of eight religious groups and with leading questions which

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[1] Massialas and Zevin, *Religious-Philosophical Systems*, pp. 1 and 2 of the Teacher's Manual.

[2] Ibid., pp. 10-12, and student resource materials, pp. 13-34.

present "puzzlements." The questions help students look for similarities and differences in customs and beliefs expressed in the ceremonies. After initially reading the documents, students are asked to develop hypotheses from which to inquire into one or more problems--for example, the relationship of husband and wife role expectations to the customs and religious beliefs. The teacher helps students focus and sharpen their definitions of the problems and assists them in their explorations of the documents and any additional data or resources pertinent to the religious traditions being considered. The hypotheses are supported (or negated) by gathering facts and evidence, such as the purposes of the various symbols and rituals used in the ceremonies; the values and beliefs expressed in each ceremony; and the relation of roles in the wedding ceremonies to role expectations in the respective marriages. If the hypotheses withstand the testing by the evidence, they may be given as generalizations. The teacher is provided with these sample generalizations for illustrative purposes:

1. Since peoples develop special ceremonies to mark important events like marriage, birth, and death, these ceremonies will reflect values and beliefs important to them. If a new religion develops in a society, its followers will develop their own ceremonies to mark these events.
2. If a religion or philosophy develops in a society, then it will not only reflect many of that society's values and beliefs but will also establish new standards and ideals.[1]

Mastery of the inquiry strategy contributes to realization of several of the values articulated earlier. The process of the strategies encourages students to develop deliberate, constructive, and critical approaches to and exploration of religious issues and phenomena. These rational explorations in turn tend to nurture empathetic appreciation for religious pluralism, and the value of increased literacy concerning the contributions of diverse religions to human cultures, past and present, may be realized. Finally, the emphasis on providing supporting evidence for assertions can be a significant feature in checking religious prejudice and bias and exercising ethical and responsible citizenship in a pluralistic society. Applied to religion studies, the potential effects of the inquiry strategy are schematized

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[1] Massialas and Zevin, *Religious-Philosophical Systems*, Teacher's Manual, pp. 10 and 11.

in Figure 6.

TABLE 6

SOCIAL INQUIRY MODEL

Syntax:	Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three
	Presentation and clarification of puzzling situation.	Development of hypotheses from which to explore or solve problem.	Define and classify hypotheses.
	Phase Four	Phase Five	Phase Six
	Explore hypotheses in terms of their assumptions, implications, and logical validity.	Gather facts and evidence to support hypotheses.	Generalized expression or solution.
Principles of Reaction:	Teacher acts as sharpener, focuser, and counselor to inquiry. He helps students to clarify their position and improve the process of study.		
Social System:	Moderately Structured. The teacher is generally initiator of inquiry and sees that it moves from phase to phase. Students, however, carry the responsibility for its development and the social norms call for open discussion among equals.		
Support System:	A teacher with patience to carry out a problem-solving approach and the resourcefulness to locate the necessary information which the inquiry may call for. Open-ended library resources and access to expert opinion.		

SOURCE: Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil, *Models of Teaching* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 74.

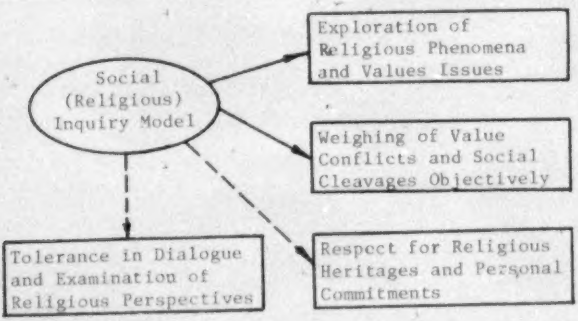
Social (Religious) Inquiry Model
Exploration of Religious Phenomena and Values Issues
Weighing of Value Conflicts and Social Cleavages Objectively
Tolerance in Dialogue and Examination of Religious Perspectives
Respect for Religious Heritages and Personal Commitments

Figure 6--Potential Effects of the Social Inquiry Strategy Applied to Religion Studies

The conclusion of this discussion on teaching strategies is a guideline statement which incorporates the varied strategies suggested for multi-disciplinary inquiry into world religions and religious phenomena. These strategies seem to be particularly well-suited to the values envisioned in this study and to the ways suggested to achieve these values, especially those related to developing student potential for multi-disciplinary, creative, and critical thinking regarding man's religions and religious phenomena and equipping of persons for more informed and responsible participation in a pluralistic society.

Guideline 23. *Three varying teaching models (chosen from among many possible ones) which may be adapted to multi-disciplinary inquiry into religions are the Advance Organizer Model, Synectics Model, and Social (Religious) Inquiry Model. The Advance Organizer Model includes a highly structured, teacher-directed strategy designed for efficient processing of information about several disciplines and their methodologies appropriate to religion studies. The Synectics Model incorporates moderately structured student-oriented techniques which may be used for imaginatively perceiving the religious phenomena, particularly artistic expressions of religions, and for stimulating creative religious self-expression. The Social (Religious) Inquiry Model utilizes a moderately structured student-oriented strategy suitable for inquiry into almost any facet of religious beliefs or practices.*

A Concluding Consideration

This study developed legal, ethical, disciplinary, and pedagogical considerations in the academic study of religions. The pedagogical considerations emphasized certain values in religion studies and how these values may be achieved by particular aims, content, and teaching strategies. But the educational environment is more than matching values, aims, and content with appropriate strategies. For the values to be achieved, content and strategies should be selected primarily for the benefit of the students. Serious consideration must ultimately be given to the characteristics of both students and teacher and how the environmental components may be matched with personally differing characteristics. Joyce and Weil, building upon the research of others, identified at least two constructs which are of importance to the matching process. These constructs are "amount of structure"

and "conceptual levels." It is perhaps gratuitous to say that educators are expected to be sensitive to their students' varying needs for structure, or lack of it, and their varying conceptual levels. What has not been apparent, perhaps, is the variety of amount of structure (high, moderate, or low) and conceptual level (high, moderate, or low cognitive complexity as well as value, motivational, and sensory orientation) implicit within strategies for teaching. The following table lists the categories suggested by Joyce and Weil and gives an indication of the variety among the six models submitted for consideration in this chapter:

TABLE 7

AMOUNT OF STRUCTURE AND CONCEPTUAL LEVEL OF SIX MODELS SUGGESTED FOR TEACHING RELIGION STUDIES

Name of Model (Creator)	Amount of Structure	Appropriate Conceptual Level
Jurisprudential Teaching (Oliver and Shaver)	High	Low
Classroom Meeting (Glasser)	Moderate	Moderate-High
Group Investigation (Thelen)	Low	High
Advance Organizer (Ausubel)	High	Low
Synectics (Gordon)	Moderate	Moderate-High
Social Inquiry (Massialas and Cox)	Moderate	Moderate

SOURCE: Models selected from Table 17-1 in Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil, *Models of Teaching* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 305.

In general, "the more highly structured models should be most appropriate for individuals of *low* complexity and vice versa."[1] If students are to progress to higher conceptual levels in religion studies, they should begin in an environment which most closely approximates

[1] Joyce and Weil, *Models of Teaching*, p. 306. This conclusion is based upon the research of David E. Hunt and associates and the formulation of their Conceptual Systems Theory, which is discussed on pages 298-308.

the degree of structure appropriate to their conceptual level. Then students may gradually be introduced to higher levels of complexity, and accompanying lower amount of structure, as may be appropriate in each particular situation.

If an educator attends to the legal, ethical, disciplinary, and pedagogical dimensions of religion studies as recommended in this study; if the educational values envisioned for religion studies seem to be compatible with these dimensions and with local curriculum approaches; if the ways and strategies to achieve these values are deemed appropriate for consideration in a local situation; and if the ultimate consideration is to benefit public school students--then the values, aims, content, and strategies must be selected in such a way so as to match particular student characteristics and conceptual levels as well as teacher preferences. The writer contends that the strategies which have been suggested comprise a continuum broad enough for use in most secondary classrooms in religion studies and that the strategies have the potential for providing the appropriate amounts of structure compatible with varying conceptual levels of students. If this contention is correct, the concern for matching the content of subject matter and processes with teacher and student characteristics is an appropriate final guideline for this book.

Guideline 24. *If public school students are to benefit ultimately from religion studies, selections of content and especially teaching strategies should be appropriate to the conceptual levels and varying needs for environmental structure represented among students in each particular classroom situation.*

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